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THE
Age of Frivolity.

PRICE 2s. 6d.

PRINTED BY JAMES CUNDEE,
Ivy-Lane.



Jane Carruthers.
Acquisit. Yorks 1810.

THE
Age of Frivolity :

A
POEM,

ADDRESSED TO THE
FASHIONABLE, THE BUSY, AND THE RELIGIOUS
WORLD.

BY
TIMOTHY TOUCH'EM.

"Doubly distress, what author shall we find
Discreetly daring, and severely kind?
The courtly Romans' shining path to tread,
And sharply smite prevailing folly dead?
Will no superior genius snatch the quill,
And save me on the brink of writing ill?"

YOUNG.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR,
AND SOLD BY WILLIAMS AND SMITH,
STATIONERS-COURT,
Jordan and Maxwell, 331, Strand; Richard Beck, 30, Ratcliff Highway; and
L. Omer, Butt-lane, Deptford.

1806.



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PREFACE.

THE following Poem took its rise from the circumstance of some very wet and winterly weather at the beginning of the year, constraining the author to seek entertainment for himself within doors. During that space, nearly the whole of the first part was written as the scenes arose to the imagination. The two other parts have been composed at intervals, some of the fragments whilst walking the streets of London, and some while rambling in the country. It seems necessary to acquaint the reader with the adventitious mode of its composition, to account for the want of connexion in the subjects, and deficiency of artful arrangement of the whole.

It will easily be seen that the materials are matters of fact, painted with a small degree of licence, merely to present their absurdity, or viciousness, in a strong and conspicuous light.

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The author hopes, that whatever seeming severity he may have occasionally assumed, still it will appear, that in general a joke lurks under the disguise, and that he is really severe only where the object is offensive to good manners, or sound morals, and may become injurious to private happiness or public worth. It is also hoped, that however playful he may seem, yet that it will be apparent he is serious, and earnest, in endeavouring to discountenance folly and vice, and most heartily desirous of promoting the cause of truth and virtue. He solemnly declares he would sooner burn this production, and all that he has ever written, than wilfully propagate an error, or excite a pain in the bosom of innocence.

The writer has nothing to say for the manner of the performance, further, than to remind the reader that it would be absurd to describe extravagant and frivolous topics in a polished strain of poetry. The author employs himself with verse as with music, not as his profession, but amusement; and many a care and vexation has he beguiled by the means of these powerful agents in present enjoyment.

The serious reader will perceive that the subject increases in importance as it proceeds, until it closes

with the most solemn of all things, still preserving as much as possible the smile of gay good-humour, in order that the most trifling mind might be induced to think, whilst aiming only at its own entertainment.

It may be thought strange, that so dreadful a practice as duelling should be placed among amusements; but, as the subject required the notice of what is most frivolous, it was impossible this ridiculous proof of honor and wanton waste of life should be omitted; and where else could it be placed? not among occupations, for as yet assassination and murder have not become a trade among us; nor still less could it be put to the account of religion, which teaches the spirit and practice of humility, meekness, and love, instead of the pride and revenge necessary to make a duellist. Beside, however fatally the practice may terminate to the parties engaged in it, it often becomes a matter of entertainment to the fashionable world.

That the piece, (such as it is) may contribute to the pleasure and improvement of the reader, is the utmost desire of the author.

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THE
AGE OF FRIVOLITY.

PART I.

AMUSEMENT.

YE airy beings who incessant glide
Through Fancy's realms, and o'er her works preside:
Ye sylphs and sylphids, light fantastic throng,
Who float like summer gossamers along;
Or subtler Genii, who fine webs devise
To catch your fools, as spiders catch their flies;
Or Morpheus, king of dreams, whose potent hand
With leaden sceptre sways Utopia's land;
Oh! aid the Muse in her adventurous flight,
Through the vast regions of a world of night. 10
It comes,---I feel the aid, and o'er my theme
I nod and yawn, and scribble while I dream.

Boys blow their bubbles, then with wonder gaze,
To see them dance awhile their airy maze;
They burst, they vanish, still the suds supply,
Another, and another yet to fly.

 French Revolution.

So bubbles, empty, fleeting, light, as these,
 Our boys and girls of six feet high, can please.
 E'en nations have their play-things; right or wrong,
 Or bless'd, or scourg'd, all ends in dance and song.

See France, long held in hoodwink'd bondage fast,
 Rouse from her lethargy of ages past.

Now Vengeance undistinguishing takes place,
 Alike on ancient follies, forms, and grace.
 King, priests, and nobles sweeps to general doom,
 Like worn out lumber from a filthy room.

Ten dreadful years she heaves convulsive throes,
 The fev'rish crisis of a nation's woes.

How many from their homes in terror fled!

How many on the crowded scaffold bled! 30

What crews ingulphed beneath the briny main!*

What slaughter'd hosts bestrew'd th' embattled plain!

What sudden change--what desp'rate fits she had!

Half Europe trembled, while all France run mad.

What mighty cause, or demon most profane,
 With vile enchantments, turu'd the nation's brain?
 Two hellish monsters in the work combin'd,
 One held the body chain'd, and one the mind.

* The English and republican fleets had an engagement in 1794, in which four of the French ships were sent to the bottom with all their crews.

Destruction of the old Forms.

First hard Oppression rul'd with iron rod,
Then Superstition worshipp'd man for God. 40
So long they reign'd, and so intrench'd their pow'r,
'They never dreamt of Retribution's hour.
Grown bold and fearless, insolent in pride,
The veil of Decency was cast aside.
The laughing world saw thro' the forms they wore,
And scorn'd the idols they ador'd before.

Thus near the ocean's side some tall cliff stands,
Frowns o'er the sea, and shades the humbler lands;
Wave after wave each other restless chase,
To kiss its feet, and undermine its base. 50
At length the hollow mass falls down the steep,
And rude waves triumph o'er the prostrate heap.

All reverence banish'd, all restraint o'erthrown,
They boast a portion, yet to them unknown;
These crimes, O Liberty! were done for thee,
Thy name their passport, and thy cause their plea.
Alas! they knew Thee not, but blindly chose
Licentiousness instead, thy worst of foes;
And thou hast left them, frivolous and vain,
To forge themselves a new and heavier chain; 60
To rear an higher throne, where frowns and rules
An alien man of blood, to scourge the fools.

Rome's mitred priest, before the sacred shrine
The unction pours, conferring *Right Divine*.

Making an Emperor.

Lord of the Church an infidel proclaims—

A bold usurper, *God's Vicegerent* names.

The listn'ning rabble at the mummary stare

And blush, to think what slaves and dupes they are.

Thus Death, and Horror, Famine, War, and Woe,

All end at last in pageantry and show. 70

From these sad scenes the Muse indignant flies,

And longs at home to find a people wise.

Shall Britain, 'mongst the nations first confess'd,

So oft reprov'd, and yet so spar'd and bless'd ;

Whose busy sons their neighbours' failings seek,

Disdain the proud and ridicule the weak ;

Whose fame is justly sounded round the earth,

For solid character and sterling worth.

Who claim from all the world the high applause,

Of firm integrity and wholesome laws. 80

Who boast among their race the ablest men

To rule a senate, or to wield a pen.

Whose merchants drive their commerce o'er the globe,

Whose judges gird with truth a righteous robe ;

Whose seamen rove unrivall'd o'er the main ;

Whose soldiers fearless meet the dread campaign.

Whose pulpits oft the eloquence resound

Of morals pure, and doctrines most profound.

Whose Monarch reigns to Monarchy's true end,

To kings a pattern, and his peoples' friend. 90

Puerile Entertainment.

Shall Britain's sons disgrace their fathers' fame,
And shrink to pigmies with a giant name ?
Alas ! the times display the fearful signs
That mark a nation when her worth declines.

Come, dauntless Truth, report thy just survey :
Bring forth thy balance, men and things, to weigh.
The honest heart that dares thy standard trust
Shall find thee candid, tho' thou wilt be just.

Amusement, business, and religion, form
'The objects men pursue with ardour warm. 100
And first attention, let Amusement claim,
Man's first pursuit, and last, and gen'ral aim.

See crowds on crowds impatient press along—
A phalanx close, an elbow'd struggling throng.
What monstrous wonder draws a wond'ring age ?—
A *boy* shall strut and fume upon the stage.
A little master ranting through a scene,
To shew us, what an author does not mean ;
What Shakespeare did not write, who Nature drew ;
How Garrick did not act, who Nature knew. 110
Preposterous form the mimic art destroys,
Kings are not babes, nor heroes little boys.
Such gross absurdities the plot betray,
And drive illusion like a dream away.
E'en Fiction must be *probable*, to please ;
For what is likely, we believe with ease.

 Early Destruction.

But things impossible, when gravely told,
 Will make us chuckle till our sides we hold :
 And Tragedy so oddly out of place
 Becomes broad Farce, and grins with solemn face.

Poor child ! soft Pity trembles at thy doom,
 So early blasted—with'ring in thy bloom.*
 Thy budding talents, foster'd with due care,
 Had made thee on Life's scenes an actor rare.
 Had in some useful station nobly shone,
 And in thy country's glory form'd thine own.
 But thou, alas ! art sacrific'd too soon,
 To live—perhaps to die, a stage buffoon.
 Thy strength must languish, and thy heart must throb
 To give amusement to an idle mob. 130
 Thus sickly children loath the wholesome meal,
 But unripe fruit with eager longings steal,
 Creep to some corner from a parent's sight,
 And munch sour gooseberries with sweet delight.

* The above was written when he was driven from the stage by illness, supposed to have been occasioned by excessive exertion. The following statement will illustrate the frivolous taste of the times : it is said that Master Betty has made a new engagement at Drury-Lane, by which he is to receive 100 guineas a night for every night of his performance this season, and for fifty nights of the next he is to receive 5000 guineas, with a free benefit, which it is engaged shall produce 1200l.

European Mag. March, 1805.

Vitiated Taste in Music.

Nor thus alone is Taste deprav'd exprest—
“ Music has charms to sooth the savage breast,”
So sung the poet, and so Nature sings,
But ah! Refinement looks for better things.
Something revers'd the maxim now appears,
And savage sounds must sooth our fashion'd ears.
Not such, as Handel wrote, or *would* be sung
Where the chaste ear directs the flippant tongue.
Hush—Brayman sings a most delicious howl,*
Then shrieks a cadence like a screaming owl.
Signora squalls, and thrills like frighten'd geese,
Or creaking wheels, that cry for want of grease.
Oh mercy on our ears! 'tis finer far
Than e'en the Indians' piercing whoop of war.
The tortur'd crowds surpris'd with frightful sound,
Much wonder where such melody was found; 150
Admire and praise the agonizing strain,
But never wish to feel the like again.

So may you hear on some fine summer's day,
An amorous ass his tender sonnet bray.
Loud, and more loud the jumping notes rebound,
Till the hills echo groan for groan around.
Then in gradation ends the hideous squall,
Low and more low, a dying, dying fall.

* This is not intended to depreciate the natural or acquired talents of any individual, but as a general ridicule of affectation and extravagance.

 Extravaganzas;

Thus while the voice offensive skill betrays,
 As through harsh semi-tones, ad lib, it strays ;* 160
 Our instruments th' impatient ear regales
 With fighting battles or narrative tales.
 Hear tutor'd miss her well conn'd task engage,
 The last new puzzling whimsy of the rage,
 Where Base and Tenor, ill-consorted pair,
 Confound each other with a different air.
 Nimble her fingers sweep the keys along,
 A wild sonata, or unmeaning song :
 The flats and sharps, the discords and the shakes,
 Prove what your head can bear before it aches. 170
 'Tis wondrous clever—oh, 'tis vastly fine—
 Not for the soothing strain, the touch divine,
 That move the cords which twine about the heart :
 No—but for all the dissonance of art.
 Tho' difficult to play, and sure to tire,
 Yet we must praise what amateurs admire.

Thus seeking *kecnly* labour to beguile,
 The dull-ear'd sawyer plies his grating file.
 The twanging blade the suffering ear assails
 With notes as sweet as when a gossip rails ; 180

* It is said that Handel, being present when a performer made an excursion of the kind alluded to, made him a profound bow on his return, saying, " You're welcome home again, sir."

The Ball and Masquerade.

Yet he scrapes on, nor heeds the din a straw,
That sets your teeth an edge, and sharps his saw.

See yonder beaux, so delicately gay ;
And yonder belles, so deck'd in *thin* array—
Ah! rather see not, what a modest pride
Would teach a maiden's decency to hide ;
The dress so flimsy, the *exposure* such
'Twould almost make a very wanton blush.
E'en married dames, forgetting what is due
To sacred ties, give half-clad charms to view. 190
What calls them forth to brave the daring glance ?
The public ball—the midnight wanton dance.
There, many a blooming nymph by fashion led,
Has felt her health, her peace, her honour fled ;
Truss'd her fine form to strange fantastic shapes,
To be admir'd and twirl'd about by apes :
Or, mingling in the motley masquerade,
Found Innocence by vizor'd Vice betray'd.

Oh! Fashion, to thy wiles thy vot'ries owe 200
Unnumber'd pangs of sharp domestic woe.
What broken tradesmen and abandon'd wives
Curse thy delusions through their wretched lives!
What pale-fac'd spinsters vent on thee their rage,
And youths decrepid, ere they come of age !
What parents mourn a spendthrift's endless cost !
What orphans grieve a father's portion lost !

Fashionable Illness.

These are your mimics, oh, ye fallen great;
Thus your example poisons all the state !

So to some river's head, on sultry day
An herd of filthy swine betake their way.* 210
First slake their thirst, then rolling in the mud,
Cool their rough hides and sully all the flood :
Swift down the tainted stream the nuisance flows,
And spreads pollution wheresoe'er it goes.

Sweet summer smiles, and on its balmy wings
Delightful health, and rich abundance brings ;
All feel its influence hope and joy distil,
Save Pleasure's train—and they, poor things, are ill.
They have the megrims, vapors, or the spleen,
They are so nervous, grow so pale, and lean ; 220
They have a sort of something, somehow got,
Have so much suffer'd from they know not what,
That they must haste to catch the sea-side air,
Just when and where such *invalids* repair.

There, Pleasure waits, their doctor and their nurse,
To *fill* their time up, and to *drain* their purse.
Now all alert, most rapidly they mend,
Ere mirth grows stale—while money lasts to spend ;

* This allusion applies only to the fallen great, whose extravagance and dissipation corrupt the vulgar.

Trip to Margate.

Who will, may view with meditative eye,
Fair Nature's scenes, of ocean, earth, and sky. 230
These day-light things may please the vulgar sight,
The theatre gives nobler scenes at night.

Who will may gaze at stars, or break his nap
To see the sun arise from Ocean's lap.

They would themselves be gaz'd at, and design
More brilliant at th' assembly-room to shine.

Who will may hear the lark's sweet morning's song,
The nightly concert draws and charms the *throng* :

Let sober cits and people of *no note*,
According to their cloth cut out their coat, 240
'Twould give these folk of spirit vast offence,
And spoil their mirth, to talk about expense;
How things go on at home, who minds the trade,
How bills run up, or what are left unpaid.
Thus many a jaunt to others' loss is found
To end, in two good shillings in the pound.

Are there no palliatives?---O yes, we boast
Of charities, a most consoling host.
Hearts thus attender'd easily must melt,
For all the woes by human nature felt. 250
Cast in Refinement's nicely polished mould,
Brim full of sentiment as head can hold,
The fine wrought feelings overflow apace,
Like bubbling kettles in too hot a place.

A Charity Sermon.

Print but the cause, let Bounty purchase fame,
And large donations silence Sorrow's claim.

The Doctor preaches much how doing good
Should clothe the naked, give the hungry food,
Instruct the ignorant, reclaim the vile,
And shiv'ring Misery brighten to a smile. 260
How Charity the prize of Virtue wins,
And covers, like a cloak, a heap of sins ;
How one poor mite; if but devoutly giv'n,
Shall please our Maker---aye, and merit Heav'n :
Yet he may preach alone, unless the news
An *anthem* advertise to fill the pews.*

The playhouse lends her minstrels, and the throng
Smile at Messiah's griefs in graceless song.
Then, at the door th' obtrusive plate receives
The jingling coin the crowd reluctant gives. 270

Now view another scene, the Tavern, where,
The costly ticket tempts to dainty fare.
Dishes close rang'd exhale a grateful fume,
And all is plenty, saving elbow room.
Few have good *taste* to relish things divine,
But all have stomachs, and know how to dine.

* The intelligent reader will perceive that this description does not belong to that class of clergymen called evangelical.

Charitable Feasting.

No niggard reck'nings damp th' expensive meal,
Though each one's cost shall from the pockets steal,
What might some poor man's vacant board have
spread,

One happy week with something more than bread !

The table clear'd, the frequent glass goes round,
And joke, and song, and merriment abound.

Now—ere good-humor fails, or plenty palls,
For new subscriptions Pity timely calls.

Forth come the guineas, while the chair proclaims
A growing list of charitable names.

'Tis well they come, the cause is not the worse,
Whatever motive draws upon the purse.

From feasts and sermons one plain fact remains,
That men have *bowels* if they have not *brains*. 290

Yet, 'midst our luxury, be it understood
Some traits remain of rugged hardihood :
See yonder crowd assembled in the field,
With looks ferocious, and with hearts well steel'd ;
What boisterous shouts, what blasphemies obscene,
What eager movements, urg'd with threat'ning mien,
Present the spectacle of human kind,
Devoid of feeling, destitute of mind ;
With ev'ry dreadful passion rous'd to flame,
And sense of justice lost, and sense of shame. 300

Bull-baiting.

What mighty project centering in the place,
Attracts the village rabble, vile and base,
Drains from the plough, the flail, the shop, the stall,
The idle and the drunken, one and all ;
What, but the pleasure, cruelly to treat
A noble beast, the sire of milk and meat !
Bound, by the treach'rous cowards to the stake,
His goaded sides with indignation shake :
The strong mouth'd dogs let loose (of fiercest sort
Train'd by their masters to the barb'rous sport,) 310
Around the 'tramell'd bull they teasing ply,
Provoke his rage, and watch his vengeful eye.
Yet oft his sinewy neck and pointed horn
Throws high his puny enemies in scorn :
Thence sprawling on the ground they mangled lie,
Or dash'd to pieces, in an instant die.

Gall'd by his bonds, and worried out, at length,
The fruitless toil exhausts his mighty strength ;
Beset with numbers, friendless and forlorn,
His nostril pinion'd, and his dewlap torn. 320
He sinks, confounded, groaning deep and loud,
While shouts of hellish joy inspire the crowd.

Then the stout butcher smites the killing blow,
The last sad scene of this degrading show :
Unless with cruelty refin'd, a season short
They spare him, for another day of sport.

Cruel Diversion.

These are exploits design'd to keep alive
Our rustic mirth, and make the country thrive.*
Sanction'd by Law, these dastard scenes shall breed
An harden'd race, prepar'd for daring deed. 330
'Tis granted, such amusements may impart
A love of *cruelty*, a *flinty* heart ;
May make men hate their work, and join the roar,
Of drunken squabblers at the alehouse door.
The army and the navy hence may draw
Large levies of tough boobies, rough and raw ;
These *may* stand shooting at, tho' fitter far
For mutiny and plunder, than for war.
They may be marshall'd, but with whip and goad,
As stubborn asses trudge a sandy road. 340

Thus the wild Indians doom to dreadful fate,
The captive, helpless victim of their hate ;
By each ingenious art of torment try
To add fresh horrors ere the suff'rer die.
The scalpless scull, the visage ghastly grim,
The mangled body, and the writhing limb,
The madness of despair, the dying groan,
Give mirth, to savage monsters only known.

* It would be a pity should the friends of morality ever forget a very brilliant speech, designed to vindicate this amusement, and prevent a stop being put to it by authority.

 Degradation.

The warrior thus to blood trains up his boy,
While girls and women dance around with joy. 350

Where sterling worth is wanting, empty pride
Is oft to coarse brutality allied.

A people wanton, frivolous and vain,
Will soon to rugged nature sink again ;
Retain perhaps their titles and their boast,
Tho' modest Virtue long gave up the ghost.

Thus Rome's descendants their old sires disgrace,
A fiddling, an assassinating race ;
Can sing an Opera tune, and in a breath,
With sly stiletto, do the work of death. 360

We blame these crimes, and justly call the acts
Base murder, shudd'ring at the horrid facts ;
Yet we have ways to make a brother bleed,
And call it *fair and honorable deed* !
And art thou, Honor, ever to be found,
Within a friend's or foe's expiring wound ?
'Tis vile imposture ; *Cowardice* and *Shame*
Assume thy shape, and *murder* in thy name.

Some breach of manners, some unthought offence,
Which might provoke a smile to common sense, 370
Will work these waspish gentry to such rage,
As blood or death alone can e'er assuage !

Oh ! ye who value life, who feel an awe
For him who stamp'd on Nature its first law

The Duelist.

Of self-regard—then bade our love embrace
Our kindred—neighbor—all the human race.

Ye who would cherish Peace, or bear within
A tranquil mind, and sleep in a whole skin ;
Who would not ere they fade, Life's prospects mar,
Or rush unbidden to Jehovah's bar : 380

Who would not thither send another's ghost,
To curse you for a life untimely lost !
Beware the man—Oh ! never call him friend,
Who bears his honor on his rapier's end. .
Such furies should like madmen be confin'd,
Or snappish curs—chain'd up from all mankind ;
Or Europe might these testy spirits haste
To challenge tigers on some desert waste ;
There might their prowess do the world some good,
By slaught'ring their own likeness—beasts of blood.

He is no proper man to wear a sword,
Who rages like a demon, at a word ;
He is no gentleman, who can not bear
A wise rebuke, but he must war declare ;
He, no philosopher, who can not cool
His passion when insulted by a fool ;
He is no wise man, who would throw away
A life, in some ridiculous affray ;
He is no Christian, who can not forgive
A fellow-worm, nor let th' offender live ; 400

 Fashionable Honor.

He, no good subject, who would madly break
 The laws of God and man for vengeance sake !
 He, no good husband—brother—parent—friend,
 Who rashly all relationship would end ;
 Who Life's endearing ties would all divide
 To please his anger, or support his pride.
 He is no hero who can not sustain
 The world's contempt, and scorn that world again.
 Frail is that honor, little worth our care,
 That withers at the touch of blighting air ; 410
Weak is that man, oppress'd with basest fear,
 Who kills—or dies lest Custom's slaves should sneer.*

Tho' swordsmen on pre-eminence insist,
 " Rise, honest Muse," and sing the men of fist :
 These, in their way, have talents, and may claim
 A lower nitch beneath the dome of *Shame* ;
 These have no swords, nor other *arms* they bear,
 Than those which ev'ry shoulder ought to wear.
 These have no doubtful courage to support,
 Nor own the laws of Honor's touchy court : 420

* Captain M'Namara, and Colonel Montgomery's two dogs
 happening to quarrel, their masters fought a duel on the occa-
 sion, when Colonel Montgomery was slain—the death of Lord
 Camelford in a quarrel with his friend—and the unhappy
 slaughter of General Hamilton in America, are woful cases
 in point on this subject.

Pugilism.

These have no quarrel, but about the prize,
And feel no dread, but of the next assize ;
Yet they can combat with ferocious strife,
And beat an eye out, or thump out a life ;
Can bang the ribs in, or bruise out the brains,
And die, like noble blockheads, for their pains.

Behold the ring, how strange the group appears
Of dirty blackguards, commoners, and peers ;
Vile Jews, who heed not Moses nor his laws,
And scoundrel Christians, scandals on the cause ;
The Muse alike the filthy work disclaims
To tell the heroes' or their patrons' names.

What eager bets, what oaths at ev'ry breath,
Who first shall shrink, or first be beat to death.
Thick fall the blows, and oft the boxers fall,
While hideous shouts for fresh exertions call ;
Till bruis'd and blinded, batter'd sore, and maim'd,
One gives up, vanquish'd, and the other lam'd.

Say men of wealth, say what applause is due*
For scenes like these, when patronis'd by you ; 440
These are your scholars, who, in humbler way,
But with less malice, at destruction play :
You, like game-cocks, strike Death with polish'd steel,
They, dunghill-bred, use only Nature's heel ;

* The newspapers say that a nobleman paid the debts of one of these pugilists to the amount of 300l. that he might be released from Newgate to fight a prize-battle !

Cruelty to Horses.

They fight for *something*, you for *nothing* fight ;
They *box* for *love*, but you *destroy* in *spite* !

Now to the race-ground let us bend our course,
And view the suff'rings of the noble horse ;
His mighty pow'rs in various ways conduce,
To man's convenience, pleasure, health, and use ;
Patient he bears, or draws the pond'rous load,
Or swiftly skims along the distant road ;
A load, that thrice our strength might tug in vain,
A distance, our two legs too late might gain ;
He meekly leads the share through stiffen'd clay,
Or proudly braves the sword in War's array !
Bears Pomp and State above the vulgar throng,
And drags at ease dull Indolence along.
He yields submission to his puny lord,
Content with food and rest—a cheap reward, 460
Yet man ungratefully too oft repays
His faithful servant, in his wither'd days ;
Forestals his youth, and with insatiate rage
Works out his prime to premature old age ;*
Crops his long ears to please a cruel whim,
And nicks his flowing tail to make it trim ;

* Alluding to a method practised by some of the Yorkshire horse-dealers, of drawing their colts' teeth, in order to sell a colt of three years age for one of five years, by which their strength is worn out before they come to maturity,

A Horse Race.

Bruises his bones for undesign'd mistake,
Or lacerates his flesh for passion's sake ;
Wagers his strength—spurs on the panting steed
To dreadful distance, or unnat'ral speed. 470

His foaming nostrils, and his sides of gore,
The steaming dewes that burst from ev'ry pore ;
His trembling limbs and heaving chest declare,
How great his injuries and tortures are !

Say, what the cause, a race—where blockheads
meet

To pride themselves, because their horse is fleet ;
Where gambling jockies practice vile deceit,
And bully e'en the simpletons they cheat ;
Where *sharpers* flock to make the *flats* a prey,
And many a purse is conjur'd clean away ; 480
Where Folly's children crowd to be amus'd,
By seeing *nobler animals* abus'd !

Yes, and fine ladies too, can grace the scene,
Or turn to jockies, flitting o'er the green :
A lady—and in public *ride a race*,—
Ah ! where was female modesty and grace ?
With grooms contending which shall win the plate,
And mighty stakes depending on her fate !
Thus we can laugh, and make God's creatures groan,
And in their degradation work our own ! 490

So, buxom wenches, at a country wake
With nimble feet push on, the prize to take ;

Society.

While grinning loobies round the linen wait,
To urge their flight and mock their aukward gait.

Man loves society, nor could alone
Be happy, seated on an envied throne.
E'en mighty monarchs must at times unbend,
And sink the dull superior in the friend.
The jaded scholar his lov'd closet quits
To chat with folks below, and save his wits ; 500
Peeps at the world awhile with curious look,
Then flies again with pleasure to his book.
The tradesman hastes away from Care's rude gripe,
To meet the neighboring club, and smoke his pipe.
All this is well, in decent bounds restrain'd,
No health is injur'd, and no mind is pain'd.

Yet oft society brings on excess,
That ends in gluttony, and drunkenness ;
Strengthen'd by numbers, men those freedoms take,
Which each alone would shun for conscience' sake.
One bad example leads the rest along
Like sheep, who after a bell-wether throng :
Hence rose that pest of morals, Virtue's bane,
The drinking-club, the bacchanalian train !

Heav'n gave the vine, and bade its shoots distil
Rich nectar, the thick cluster'd grapes to fill :
'Twas kindly meant to cheer the drooping heart,
Or strength renew'd, to languid limbs impart ;

Intemperance.

The pains or griefs of suff'ring life t' assuage,
Or pour fresh vigor through the veins of age. 520

Intemperance these benefits destroys,
Remorseless poisons the pure spring of joys—
Draws from the gen'rous vine disorder base,
The bloated body or empurpled face ;
Intoxication's stupid vacant grin,
Or madness foaming from the fire within :
Or loathsome sickness, weak'ning all the frame,
Or drowning dropsy, or the fev'rish flame ;
Or early age, that saps the vig'rous prime,
Or sudden death, that snaps the thread of time ! 530

The firmest strength this wretched vice devours,
The purest, happiest intellect deflow'rs ;
The clearest judgment with thick mist surrounds,
The keenest reason smothers and confounds ;
The gentlest mind to rudest crimes ensnares,
And ruins the most prosperous affairs.
Oh ! strange ambition, infamous renown,
Whose throat capacious most can guzzle down ;
Who last can sit, and keep the drunken roar,
When all his comrades wallow on the floor. 540

Such was thy fame, great Bibo, many a year,
Till thou wast poor, and old red port was dear ;
Then, at the parish workhouse, something loth,
Thy drink was gruel, and thin mutton-broth ;

Gambling.

A week thy carcase the poor bev'rage tried,
But lik'd it not—and sadly sober died!

Behold yon group fast fix'd at break of day,
Whose haggard looks a sleepless night betray ;
With stern attention, silent and profound,
The mystic table closely they surround: 550
Their eager eyes with eager motions join,
As men who meditate some vast design;
Sure these are statesmen met for public good,
For some among them boast of *noble* blood ;
Or, are they traitors holding close debate,
On desp'rate means to overthrow the state :
For there are men among them, whose domains,
And goods and chattles lie within their brains.
No—these are students of the blackest art,
That can corrupt the morals or the heart ! 560
Yet are they oft in Fashion's ranks preferr'd,
And men of honor—if you take their word ;
But they can plunder, pillage, and devour
More than *poor robbers* at the midnight hour ;
Lay deeper schemes to manage *lucky hits*,
Than artful swindlers, living by their wits ;
Like cunning fowlers spread th' alluring snare,
And glory when they pluck a pigeon bare.
These are our gamesters, who have basely made
The cards and dice their study and their trade. 570

The Gamester.

How many a youth these harpies have undone,
Who swift from hence the "Road to Ruin" run !
Here many a fool hath fickle fortune sought,
And all his injur'd race to begg'ry brought !

Among the idiot pranks of wealth's abuse,
None seems so monstrous, nor has less excuse,
Than that, which throws an heritage away
Upon the lawless chance of desp'rate play ;
Nor is there, among knaves, a wretch more base
Than him who steals it with a smiling face, 580
Who makes diversion to destruction tend,
And thrives upon the ruin of a friend !

Behold yon frantic wretch—old Muckworm's heir,
He foams with rage—then sinks to black despair.
At one advent'rous cast he lost the whole,
And curses Fortune, gambling, and his soul ;
He rushes forth, while Conscience stings severe,
And, with a pistol ends his mad career ;
The plundering crew with jokes his fate deplore,
Divide his spoils, then lay fresh snares for more. 590

Thus grandsires labor—then begin to save,
Then fathers follow, heaping to the grave ;
Then come the grandsons, better fed than taught ;
Too rich for labor, and too proud for thought ;
Profusely losing all their sires had won,
Just ending where their ancestors begun.

Card-party.

The love of Play can taint the female mind,
By Nature form'd most gentle, most refin'd ;
Can change the spirit, once an angel bright,
To fiend-like fury, black as Imps at night ; 600
Can make them selfish, cruel, and profane---
Peevish with loss, and covetous with gain ;
Can chase away domestic peaceful joys
With crowds, confusion, rioting and noise ;
Can draw by placid smiles a giddy train,
To learn that routs and cards are not in vain ;
But manag'd well, can ladies' smiles repay,
By taking money--in a *genteel* way.

See yonder sober set, they only mean
To keep themselves awake, and chase the spleen ;
These reckon gambling an atrocious crime,
And play for trifles---just to kill the time ;
Time, that with others flies so swift away,
With them must flag, and creep with dull delay.

Poor wither'd Age, to second childhood brought,
That cannot read, and is averse to thought :
Amus'd with baubles, may forget the gout,
And dribble Life's last dregs thus foully out.
Still Pity views the scene with tearful eye,
Lamenting, thus men live, and thus they die ! 620
But blooming youth, or vig'rous years employ'd
At silly cards, is time indeed destroy'd.

Book making.

Hour after hour condemn'd to such a fate,
Is so much blotted from Life's scanty date,
Which busy Mem'ry reckons up at last,
Shrinks at their ghosts, and mourns the murder'd
past !

So, patient near some purling river's side
The angler sits, till dewy evening-tide :
His day dos'd out---some mighty sport he feigns,
And carries home two minnows for his pains. 630

But balls and cards not all our thoughts engage ;
Ours is a studious literary age ;
Ours is a land of books, and we exceed
In happy numbers who make shift to read.
Our learned authors have the world supplied
With all they knew---and something more beside ;
All Fancy's stores have rummag'd, cull'd, and sack'd,
And stretch'd invention till it almost crack'd ;
Yet our discoveries have been but few
Of things important, or of subjects new, 640
Save now and then, when some great genius shone
Bright as the sun, with lustre all its own.

Of old, book-making was a mighty charge ;
They aim'd at folios, weighty, thick, and large ;
Firm as the pyramids of ages past,
And destin'd, ages yet to come, to last.

Ours are productions of a lighter sort,
Spruce pocket-volumes, little, thin, and short,
With here and there a fragment of old wit
Re-modell'd, varnish'd, cut and squar'd to fit. 650
So shepherds build their huts on Egypt's plains
With clay, and sculptur'd scraps of mould'ring-fanes.
Yet we can boast of arts they never knew,
Fine woven paper ting'd with cream-like hue ;
Broad margins---rich engravings---scanty lines,
With handsome portraits, vignettes and designs ;
Thus is the eye amus'd---attention caught,
And what is best of all, not plagu'd with thought.

We boast the freedom of the British press,
And those alone who dread it, wish it less. 660
Alas ! this fount of knowledge often teams
With filthy waters, or empoison'd streams ;
Survey the lib'ray catalogue, how long
The list of titles, twice ten thousand strong.
What trash, what worse than trash the pages hold !
What tales impure,---improbable, are told !
What ghostly scenes that childish fear inspires,
Or scenes of love, that fan unhallow'd fires !
Nature and Truth, through this false medium shown,
Become distorted, shapeless, and unknown ; 670
Like some poor carcase broken on the wheel :
We shudder at the sight---the outrage feel.

Novel reading.

Morality, not squeamish now, nor nice,
Here sports and smiles, and jokes with merry vice ;
Austere, as some grave judge in solemn wig,
With sorry rascals capering a jig.

Such is the food of gross and sickly kind,
Prepar'd for youths' large appetite of mind.
The op'ning soul, where Fancy strongly acts,
Prefers romance to plain and sober facts. 680
Imagination takes a lawless range,
And feasts on faries, ghosts, and monsters strange,
Rash, mad adventures, and hair-breadth escapes,
And virtue suff'ring in a thousand shapes ;
These fill the mind with marvellous disease,
Beyond what common life can cure, or please :
Thus poignant sauces soon corrupt the blood,
And give disrelish for plain wholesome food.

The polish'd libertine, the dashing blade,
The fashion'd spinster, and the wanton jade, 690
So seeming fair, the flattering page pourtrays,
As steals from heedless youth unguarded praise ;
Presents a model whence the senses err,
And stamps for life a worthless character.

The giddy youth the prudent maxims dreads,
And mild rebukes of pitying hoary heads ;
'Throws off with scorn a parent's anxious charge,
And roves an idle prodigal at large.

The Seat of Happiness.

Men pant for happiness, but miss their mark
Like those who grope through deserts in the dark.
Ah ! who shall thither guide our wand'ring feet,
When learned sophists yet dispute its seat :
It is, say they, some certain state unknown,
To which the nervous system is most prone ;
That somewhere dwells *within* the human frame,
Where joy or grief, or passions much inflame.*
Some place it in the head---how Reason reigns
Producing solid judgment in the brains ;
Some think the heart the precious gem in folds,
Where ardor glows, and Love its empire holds. 710
Some hold the stomach can best proofs display,
Where many a good thing enters every day ;
Or, in the central diaphragm, 'tis fixt ;
The thorax and the abdomen betwixt ;
Or else the bag, we pericardium call,
Like well-wove cabbage-net contains it all.

* Happiness is defined by Mr. Paley as a certain state of the nervous system, in that part of the human frame in which we feel joy or grief, passions and affections. Whether this be the heart, as most languages express it, or the diaphragm as Buffon, or the upper orifice of the stomach, as Van Helmont thought—or rather a kind of net-work lining the whole region of the pericardium, as others imagine, is as yet undetermined.

The Source of Happiness.

Then, what excites this feeling from without
Is still a matter of perplexing doubt :
Some seek it in soft Pleasure's flow'ry scenes,
And some in busy Life's most active means. 720
Some grasp at Wealth, and hope to find it there ;
Some say it dwells with Little, void of care ;
Some seek it on Ambition's stormy height,
And some in Solitude's sequester'd flight ;
Some think it rests with Indolence and Ease,
Whilst some to seek it cross tempestuous seas.

So round and round the dog surveys his bed,
To find the softest place to lay his head ;
Then, having many a useless circle ran,
He squats him down just where he first began ! 730

Man's errors are not to himself confin'd,
A croud of imitators press behind.
Let giddy Fashion lead a devious way,
And millions yield their reason, and obey.
Thus numbers 'midst a pestilential sky
First catch the taint, then give it, and then die.
Wide and more wide doth black contagion spread,
Till half a province mingles with the dead :
Then comes Repentance, Caution, and Reform,
And prays for shelter from the dreadful storm. 740
Heav'n hears, and lays the vengeful rod aside,
That cur'd their folly and subdu'd their pride.

Rational Amusements.

There are amusements from this dross refin'd,
That recreate the body and the mind ;
That may to manly health and vigor tend,
And help the care-worn spirit to unbend ;
Which a philosopher might entertain,
And even pious christians not disdain :
Which all may innocently, freely find,
And quit, nor feel a sting remain behind. 750
From such the man refresh'd, returns again
To toil or study, and forgets the pain.
These the Muse blames not, but delights to share,
For they are pure and rational, and fair ;
But such as from Depravity arise
She meant to *rally*, and would fain *chastise*.

Old Egypt, Tyre, and Greece, and Rome, have felt -
How Lux'ry's flames can public virtues melt.
First private worth gives way, and feebly falls,
Then bold Corruption saps the city walls. 760
Thus nations rise, grow rich, grow proud and vain,
Then sink to want and ignorance again.
May England, timely warn'd, the ruin shun,
Preserve her rank, nor be by fools undone.



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THE
AGE OF FRIVOLITY.

PART II.

OCCUPATION.

I WHO have wandered long the devious way,
Where men of Pleasure for amusement stray ;
And striv'n to paint in colours warm, but true,
The living manners as they rose to view,
Have now return'd, like truant boy, to ask
Your worships' pardon, and resume my task.

I sing not now the *joys* of trifling kind,
Or cruel deeds that mark a little mind :
That work perform'd another theme requires
The Muse to sing, and other thoughts inspires. 10
The schemes that man's inventive fancy warms ;
Or little works his busy hand performs.

O Plutus ! God of Gold, thine aid impart ;
Teach me to catch the money-catching art ;
Or sly Mercurius, pilfering God of old,
Thy lesser mysteries, at least unfold,

Docks and Tunnel.

Some noble projects, plans of vast design,
Where Wealth, and Art, and Industry combine,
Adorn our country, and enrich our isles
With public benefits, and splendid piles. 20
These, like the ruins of remotest time,
In mouldering greatness awfully sublime,
May shew our sons at some far distant day
We aim'd at something great in our decay.

Our wise forefathers knew the worth of land,
And bank'd the Thames out with laborious hand ;
From fresh encroachments bound its restless tide
Within a spacious channel, deep and wide.
With equal pains revers'd, their grandsons make
On the same spot, a little inland lake ; 30
Where sheep had us'd to brouse and cattle fed,
The wond'ring waters new dominion spread ;
Where rows of houses rose through many a street,
Now, rows of ships present a City Fleet.
Nay, we had made, had Nature not refus'd,
Had Father Thames not begg'd to be excus'd,
A pretty Tunnel underneath his bed,
And left him running grumbling over-head ;
Had scratch'd a track out, like a grubbing mole,
Through a long dark, and damp, and dirty hole: 40
Like rats in sew'rs had floundered through the mud,
Instead of sailing, duck-like o'er the flood ;

Human Activity.

But bubbling springs choak'd up the project *deep*,
And trickling waters on our folly weep.

These mighty works demand the lofty lay
Of some great poet of some future day.
Our humble muse content with lower aim,
Preserves her shot for small, yet pleasant game.

Man is a busy animal, his head
Or hands must labour for his daily bread, 50
Perpetual motion circles through his veins,
And endless projects occupy his brains;
Or else in indolence he melts away
To peevish Discontent a restless prey.
If no fit plan his days with honor fill,
He must be active, though in doing ill.

All nations boast some men of nobler mind ;
Their scholars, heroes, benefactors kind ;
And Britain has her share among the rest
Of men the wisest, boldest, and the best ; 60
Yet we of knaves and fools have ample share,
And eccentricities, beyond compare.
Full many a life is spent, and many a purse
In mighty nothings, or in something worse.

Though Peter, wicked wight, to mischief prone,
Presum'd to spatter scandal at a throne ;
The Muse, sagacious, meddles not with kings,
They are inviolable, sacred things ;

A Statesman.

Who *can* do nothing wrong, *must* sure do right,
Our gracious sovereign wou'd not if he might : 70
But Ministers of State may now and then
A little err, for *they* are only men.

Our well-pois'd Constitution, Rights, and Laws,
Old England's glory, and the world's applause,
By small degrees to full perfection grew,
Like wholesome wine, most mellow when least new ;
And like good wine, may suffer by the aid
Of medd'ling vintners, in the way of trade.
The purest blessings folly may defile,
Pervert and change to seem like something vile ; 80
Our first distinction, and our last defence,
May clip our comforts, and exhaust our pence.

Great in the name a patriot father bore,
Behold a youth of promise boldly soar ;
Outstrip his fellows, clamb'ring height extreme,
And reach to eminence almost supreme.
With well-worn mask and virtue's fair pretence,
And all the art of smooth-tongu'd eloquence,
He talk'd of wise reform, of rights most dear,
'Till half the nation thought the man sincere. 90
Hail'd him the Heav'n-born Saviour of the land,
And paid blind confidence to jugg'ling hand.

Ambition having rear'd her palace-walls
Sends home the workmen, and the scaffold falls.

Public Spirit.

Ah! where is now each patriotic scheme?
Fled—like the baseless fabric of a dream:—
Oh! name them not, for some have dearly found
Contempt and danger mingle with the sound.
Poor Public Spirit physic'd, bled, and weak,
May feel complaints that fear forbids to speak; 100
As some drench'd patient keeps his suff'rings close,
In dread of doctors, and the doctor's dose;
Or, like the lions men in bondage keep,
Growl through its den, then tamely go to sleep.

Should burdens press the waggon of the state,
And those who drag it murmur at its weight,
Corruption round the grating axle steals,
And sooths like soft'ning oil the creaking wheels,
The driver smacks his whip, and shakes the rein,
Till the dull cattle tug away again. 110

A people may not like the spur of force,
And kick and caper like a restive horse;
But statesmen, like good horsemen, have a knack
Of vaulting boldly on the creatures' back;
Then, keeping firm the saddle—swift as wind
They skim away and leave compeers behind;
Yet oft by chance thrown off, in mire they sprawl,
So Wolsey tumbled,—and so P— may fall.

With all my heart, some demagogue replies,
Down with him, never, nevermore to rise. 120

The Patriot.

I love my country, for the public good
Will spend my fortune, talents, and my blood.
Again let ancient British courage wake,
Behold your liberty, your all at stake.
What endless taxes hunt you through your toils,
To fatten greedy statesmen on your spoils !
I hate those pensioners, whom courts promote
To take a bribe, and give a venial vote.
Well said, the rabble cry—this is the man
To do the nation service, if he can. 130
Pure, honest, independent, firm, and free,
He is our choice, for freedom's sons are we.
Sav'd of expence in triumph he appears
To lug administration by the ears.
With loud harangues the treas'ry bench pursues,
And makes knaves tremble in their very shoes.—
Soon comes a proper price—a worthy bait,
A vacant place, to mend a small estate :
Something that bids a fluent tongue be still,
And quiets conscience, like an opiate pill : 140
He takes his pension, or his office fees,
And leaves the mob to murmur as they please.
Well fed, well hous'd, he laughs in snug retreat,
And buys, for some poor borough, a fresh seat.
Thus the smooth courtier, and the patriot stern,
Can each change sides, as things about them turn.

The Candidate.

Like weather-cocks, that shift at every blast.
All coalesce to point one way at last.
Thus loyalty and liberty proclaim
Alike, self-interest, the gen'ral aim. 150

So, two grave Counsellors in gown and band,
With fee in pocket, and with brief in hand,
Will wrangle, scold, and bother, and contend,
As if each really were his client's friend ;
Then meet at night at table nicely spread,
Joke o'er the cause, and brothers go to bed.

'To serve our country must be high pretence,
If we may judge of service by expense.
'The county wants a member, lo! around
Profusion stalks, and patriots abound. 160

Not such as met of old, to humbly ask
Their best good man to undertake the task,
Of jogging up to town to represent
The independant shire in parliament,
Engaging all expenses to defray,
And loss of time by wages fit repay.
While he, like some long-woo'd but bashful fair,
With half reluctance listens to their pray'r.
No.—Now the cringing, boasting candidate
Must freely bleed, and spend a large estate ; 170
Must sue to be accepted, setting forth
His own great talents, consequence and worth ;

An Election.

Must blacken his opponent, and traduce
His honest fame by infamous abuse :
Must flatter dirty mobs, and basely try
Long lists of votes, like droves of pigs to buy.

In greasy hats the tawdry ribbons glare,
And blue or orange partizans declare ;
Huge tables groan with monstrous piles of meat,
That men may freely vote, who freely eat ; 180
Large butts of beer like ebbing rivers shrink,
That men may boldly poll, who largely drink.
Fierce mobs contending knock each other down,
To keep up liberty—or church and crown ;
Old friends and families in scorn divide,
Each hating each in independent pride:
As if their idol bore upon his back
The world like Atlas, as a pedlar's pack.

Close round the hustings press a voteless croud
Insulting those who vote, with clamor loud ; 190
Tumult and riot, hustle friends and foes,
Laugh law to scorn, and pluck tame order's nose ;
And years must pass while wisdom pleads in vain,
Ere rancour dies, and friendship smiles again.
So, when the winds tempestuous, cease to sweep
The mountain surface of the angry deep,
By slow degrees the heaving waves decrease,
Then sleep at last in calm and gentle peace.

Loan-jobbers.

Britain is nobly serv'd, a varied host
Have help'd her much, or much they plainly boast.
Some with their *heads* have mighty matters *plann'd*,
And some have wrought superior *feats of hand* ;
Some with their *heels* her honors high advance,
So Richer skips the rope, and Byrne can dance ;
Some with their *lips* have florid speeches made,
And said about it all that can be said.
But men of *money*, these are men indeed
Who help her out when she is most in need ;
Good, gen'rous souls ; the premier wants a loan
To aid the nation's projects—or his own, 210
A large round sum, that at some future day
Another load of taxes must repay.
Forth steps each heavy purse-man, like a friend
Contending who the first, and most shall lend :
Like connoisseurs sharp struggling to prevail
In buying pictures up, at Christie's sale.
Sure this is vastly gen'rous—aye, but loans
Are pretty pickings of a nation's bones.

Blest paper-credit, thou with wond'rous ease
Canst conjure up what sums thy masters please ;
Canst pay vast debts, without one farthing paid,
And make large premiums from a promise made.

Here we grow rich from nothing : mark again,
How we can barter life, and trade on pain.

The Slave-trade.

England is free, and may she never bear
 A single slave to breathe her native air.
 But is it just, or merciful, or wise
 To bind on others, chains, ourselves despise ?
 Abroad like plundering vagabonds to roam,
 And work that mischief not endur'd at home. 230

Justice requires that men from acts refrain
 They would not from another take again ;
 Nor is it *gen'rous*, when a nation great
 O'erwhelms the feeble with oppressive weight,
 With proud advantage triumphs o'er the weak,
 And robs the poor, or tramples on the meek.
 Nor is it *policy* to dig the graves
 Of public virtues, by the hands of slaves.
 Men sink, where petty tyrannies prevail,
 To lower rank than brutes, in Nature's scale. 240
 Black infamy alike degrades and stains
 The base oppressor, and the wretch in chains.

O Wilberforce, thy eloquence hath try'd,
 Almost in vain, to rouse a nation's pride,
 To raise up mercy, grov'ling in the dust,
 And make Old England claim the name of just !

Sweet is humanity, all own it good,
 But sweeter far is sugar, press'd with blood !
 Strong arguments may strike self-int'rest dumb,
 But stronger, still, is Old Jamaica Rum : 250

National Punishments.

White is the robe of innocence, most fair,
But whiter still the cottons ladies wear !

Perish our Commerce ! a bold statesman cries,
So that our laws are safe, and honours rise :
And *this* shall perish, when true worth takes place,
Our nation's foulest blot, our worst disgrace !

Heav'n marks our vices with offended eyes,
And lifts its rod to humble, or chastise ;
Fierce blow his winds, and lo, contending waves
Plunge ships and wealth, and men to wat'ry graves.*

He speaks, and pestilence at silent night,
Steals to the couch, and breathes a mortal blight.
Destruction walks abroad, and smites his prey
Unseen, uncheck'd, amidst the blaze of day.†

He gives permission, and two guilty lands
Each other hate, and scourge with vengeful hands :
Then war bursts out, like Etna's gulf profound,
And hurls destruction swift on all around !

This waste of earnings bringing in its rear,
Such poverty, as makes e'en victory dear. 270
This sink of population, swallowing fast
The country's lab'ers in its vortex vast ;

* Alluding to the loss of the Abergavenny East-Indiaman, and others.

† The pestilence, which destroyed so many persons at Gibraltar, and so long defied the power of medicine.

Military Pageantry.

Corrupter of those manners, pure and plain,
To habits idle, wanton, and profane :
This curse of nations, butchering their prime
Of youth and strength, by thousands at a time !

This is to some DIVERSION—some a TRADE,
A legal plunder—or a gay parade.

War, in our own defence, when fight we must,
Is from *necessity*, both wise and just. 280

When nothing can appease a ranc'rous foe,
'Tis *wise* to parry the Assassin's blow.

When life, or dearer liberty's at stake,
To guard those blessings, *justly* arms we take.

Hence Britons muster ere the foe appears,
And honest citizens turn volunteers.

When plundering legions mark our peaceful home,
Precaution takes the field before they come.

But gaudy dress and decorations gay,
The tinsel trappings of a vain array, 290

The spruce-trimm'd jacket, and the waving plume,

The powder'd head emitting soft perfume ;

These may make fops, but never can impart

The soldier's hardy frame, or daring heart ;

May, in Hyde-Park, present a splendid train,

But are not weapons for a dread campaign :

May please the fair, who like a tawdry beau,

But ne'er were form'd to check an active foe.

Useful Inventions.

In some *sham-fight*, may manfully hold out,
But must not hope an *enemy* to rout. 300

Time may at length these little foibles mend,
And make them vet'rans ere the contest end ;
May realize these soldier-playing scenes,
And *prove* that courage their prompt ardor *means* :
Yet Britain hopes her sons may never need
In her defence, on their own shores to bleed.

England is great in arts as well as arms,
Invention, daily gaping wonder charms.
Projects on projects like the Alps arise,
And fill the world with *prodigies*---or *lies*. 310

A thousand heads grown grey in airy schemes
Amuse an happy age with golden dreams.
No rival skill the nothings dare invade,
Guarded and honour'd by a *patent's* aid.

Ingenious artists, who have form'd a plan,
Or work of gen'ral benefit to man,
Such the machine, whose num'rous wheels entwine
The cotton thread, or slender silken line,
Whose complicated movement cheaply spares
An host of labourers for other cares. 320
Or that vast engine working pond'rous beam,
With strength resistless, by the light-wing'd steam ;
Or that whose motion more minute and fleet,
Weaves the warm stocking, firm, and soft, and neat ;

 Patents—Nostrums.

Or that which measures time with index true,
 Pocket memorial how our minutes flew.
 Works that like these a nation's honour raise,
 Deserve its patronage, reward, and praise.

When Greathead's life-boat braves the boist'rous
 seas,

Or Jenner's Vaccination checks disease, 330

No base-deception gilds a public cheat,
 The plans are god-like, the success complete.

One guards our infant-race from dreadful taint,
 Or renders innocent its worst complaint :

And one the shipwreck'd seaman, tempest-tost,
 Bears safe from death, when hope itself is lost.
 But little trifles that impostors start,

And seize attention by the puffing art ;

Who, by sheer bare-fac'd Impudence, contrive
 On pilfer'd poor credulity to live : 340

These move at once our laughter and our rage,
 And mark the manners of a grov'ling age.

A thousand ills doth suff'ring nature feel,
 A thousand nostrums rise those ills to heal.
 Tho' pains acute, or chronical may seize,
 No man need die unless the doctors please.
 So thick infallible prescriptions throng,
 That none need suffer much, nor suffer long.

 Quackery.

Tho' magnetism toil'd, and sweat in vain
 By antick tricks and grins, to frighten pain, 350
 And did but little, finding *faith* so scarce,
 But scare the weak, and make a playhouse farce :
 Still we have tractors that who wants may try,
 If he has *faith*—and gold enough to buy.

Tho' Katerfelto's gone, and Graham died,
 Yet Both'rum lives, and many quacks beside.
 Disorders understood, and those unknown,
 The fever, asthma, dropsy, itch, or stone;
 Whate'er decays within, or spreads without;
 The blotching scurvy, or distorting gout, 360
 Their wond'rous physic conquers in a trice,
 Pay but the *fee*, and follow their *advice*.

No wonder Malthus * with sagacious head,
 Excessive population views with dread,
 And thinks Earth's hide-bound surface much too
 small,
 To furnish room and maintenance for all.
 No wonder bread is dear, and scarce the meat,
 When so much health inclines such crouds to eat ;
 No wonder heirs, in expectation pine,
 And vainly wait a tough old sire's decline. 370

* See that gentleman's Essay on Population.

Patent Lumber.

Who would be sick, or die, when wealth procures
An host of doctors, and a world of cures ?
Or who, to gratify his greedy heirs,
Would let his tott'ring carcase want repairs ?
Creative art, decrepid age supplies,
With bloom, and hair, and teeth, and sparkling eyes,
Bids youthful seeming, long its loss survive,
And deck smart belles and beaus of sixty-five.

O, rare invention ! to thy skill we owe,
Refinements, our rough fathers did not know. 380
Contrivance lumbers up our rooms, with means
To save all work, but working its machines.
Engines to cut our cucumbers with ease,
And scoops, to hollow out a stilton cheese ;
A screw and lever, that shall gently work
To draw the mighty matter of a cork ;
Grates, that shall all the cook'ry arts perform,
With scarcely fire enough to keep us warm ;
And Rumford stoves, so costly and so neat,
To stew us well, in sulphur, dust, and heat, 390

Nor to mere comforts, are our arts confin'd ;
They mend our person, manners, and our mind :
See the peruker's shop—the splendid show,
Of princes, heros, ladies, all a-row ;

Wiggery.

Of wax or plaister figures, rosy red,
Proves how a wig may grace an empty head.*

Heads worn with age, or furnish'd well within,
Nature, who gives by halves, may deck but thin :
These, may from art a covering warm acquire,
That gravity may wear, and taste admire ; 400
But youthful brows that nature knew to grace,
With flowing tresses, colour'd to the face,
At Fashion's call to shear those graceful locks,
And turn their shaven pates to barbers' blocks,
With borrow'd pride to deck a living head
From skulls perhaps now mould'ring with the dead,
Is for a man unnatural, and strange,
But in a woman, an abhorrent change.

* The following specimen of the sublime is here inserted for the benefit of such as live too distant, or who may come into the world too late to see the original :—

“ R ——— makes gentlemen and ladies' perukes on an entire new system ; which, for lightness, taste, and ease, are superior to any other in Europe. He has exerted the genius and abilities of the first artists to complete his exhibition of ornamental hair, in all its luxuriant varieties, where the elegance of nature, and convenience of art, are so blended, as at once to rival and ameliorate each other. Here his fair patrons may uninterruptedly examine the effects of artificial tresses, or poupees of all complexions, and in a trial on themselves blend the different tints with their own.”

Men out of their Places.

Ladies, whose tasteful fancy can invent
The neat trimm'd cap, their sex's ornament, 410
To look disguis'd by filthy naked wig,
Like some great boy, for petticoats too big,
Is passing strange, yet thus can fashion vile,
The fairest brows of innocence defile!

By tyrant man, of half their rights bereft,
Few fit employments are for females left !
How monstrous then, that women should contrive,
To starve their humbler sisterhood alive ;
Despise their skill, their industry restrain,
And render by contempt, their talents vain ! 420

Where are the men who ought to man our fleet,
Or march on land, a threat'ning foe to meet ?
Th' athletic forms by nature pointed out
For sturdy porters, or for ploughmen stout ;
Whose brave thick heads a load of fish might bear,
And deep base voices cry the dainty fare :
Where are they ?—justling from their proper place,
Neglected female worth, and suff'ring grace !

Man-milliners, and mantua-makers swarm,
With clumsy hands to deck the female form ; 430
With brawny limbs to fit fine ladies' shapes,
Or measure out their ribbons, lace, and tapes ;
Or their rude eye the bosom's swell surveys,
'To cut out corsets, or to stitch their stays ;

 Females oppressed.

Or making essences, and soft perfume,
 Or paint, to give the pallid cheek fresh bloom :
 Or with hot irons, combs, and frizzling skill,
 On ladies' heads, their daily task fulfil ;
 Or, deeply vers'd in culinary arts,
 Are kneading pastry, making pies and tarts : 440
 Or, clad in motly coat—the footman neat
 Is dangling after miss with shuffling feet,
 Bearing in state to church her book of pray'r,
 Or, the light pocket she disdains to wear :
 Or, in a parlor snug, the powder'd lout,
 The tea, and bread and butter hands about.

Where are the women, whose less nervous hands
 Might fit these lighter tasks, that pride demands ?
 Some feel the scorn that poverty attends—
 Or pine in meek dependence on their friends ; 450
 Some patient ply the needle day by day,
 Poor half-paid sempsters, wasting life away :
 Some drudge in menial, dirty, ceaseless toil ;
 Bear market-loads, or grov'ling, weed the soil !

* Mr. Holcroft, in his account of Paris, tells us, that a young lady of fashion was observed to have a tall fellow always following her wherever she went : her grandmother one day asked her, what occasion she had for that man to be always behind her ; to which she replied, “ I must blow my nose, must not I, when I want ? ”—this great genius was actually employed to carry her pocket-handkerchief.

Fashionable Education.

Some walk abroad, a nuisance where they go,
And *snatch from infamy the bread of woe!*

Too much of this from education springs,
That turns the youthful mind to trivial things ;
Old age, without it, still remains a child—
A garden choak'd with weeds—or desert wild. 460
But education gives, when pointed wrong
Habits and errors—weakness strangely strong.
The mind, thus cultur'd, seems a gay parterre,
Where gaudy flow'rs and pois'nous shrubs appear !

To form the person now, is all the care
To polish well the surface of the fair ;
But wisdom's laws, and sacred truths that tend
The head to furnish, or the heart to mend ;
Or humbler duties, balm of social life,
That stamp the future blest *domestic* wife ; 470
These, their high spirits deem of small concern,
Too mean to practise, and too base to learn.
To teach the mind to think is needless cost,
Oft poorly paid, and sometimes labour lost :
To lisp bad French, and massacre a tune,
The rare accomplishments, above all boon.

One vast acquirement dignifies the rest,
Good-breeding's brightest proof, and surest test ;
Which she who wants, tho' lovely, good, and wise,
Is an unfinish'd fool, in fashion's eyes. 480

Academy for Dancing.

This last bright touch, that must all charms enhance,
Is—yes it is—the knowing how to dance.
To step with ease, to curt'sy with an air,
And catch with dignity the vulgar stare ;
To trail behind a peacock's gaudy train,
And stretch the neck out, like a flying crane ;
To toss the head that costly gems adorn,
As garnish'd horses nod their plumes in scorn ;
To shake the feet, and taper legs display,
Like frisking kittens, romping wild at play ; 490
To flutter 'midst admiring crowds all night,
And sleep all day—oh ! this is dear delight.

How must a favor'd world indebted be
To those great geniuses of—tweedle-dee,
Who condescend to teach this art sublime,
In *private*, to gay folks, just past their *prime* ;
Who make the catgut squeak some jocund air,
To movements awkward as a dancing bear ;
Who shew grown gentlemen, to bow and scrape,
And walk erect, and figure into shape ; 500
Who help fine ladyships their toes to place,
And bend their knees, and sink and rise with grace ;
To spread with elegance their petticoats,*
And glide majestic to the quav'ring notes.

* It has been suggested that this is a mistake, as it is not the fashion for ladies at present to wear them. . .

The captious Critic.

These are poor deeds for men, grave Crito cries,
And shakes his sapient head with upturn'd eyes.
A member of the literary tribe,
He feels the dignity of learned pride ;
But learned pride can trifle, much the same
As ignorance, beneath another name. 510

Behold sage Plod-pate, hid in snug retreat,
The most exalted garret in the street ;
Where festoon'd cobwebs dangle o'er his head,
And firm stump bed-posts elevate his bed ;
His bed, that doubly serves his weight to bear ;
By night his pallet, and by day his chair.
With spectacles on nose, and cap on crown,
That still is velvet, and that once was brown ;
With tatter'd night-gown round his shoulders flung,
And slip-shod shoes by stockings overhung ; 520
There, like a cat, in dirty hole he sits
To scare young wtlings, and snap up poor wits.

About him books are spread of ev'ry sort,
From pond'rous folios, down to pamphlets short :
On these he patient pores, with all his might,
At early morn, and oft till middle night.
He seeks not beauties, but with prying eyes
Detects a blemish, as a precious prize ;
He knows an hundred parallels to quote
Where different men on the same subject wrote, 530

The Natural Philosopher.

And proves the wond'rous fact, the rogues to shame,
That, on the *same things* they wrote *things the same*.*

He shews the world (kind soul) their great mistake
In prizing authors, for their merits' sake :
He finds defective what the gen'ral taste
Had felt instructive, beautiful, and chaste ;
Can learned skill on little specks display,
And comment half an author meant away ;
Can shew us fifty ways of being teas'd,
And prove how seldom critics can be pleas'd.† 540

Aye, this is trifling, Philosoph exclaims,
Mere sifting words, or settling empty names ;
Far nobler fruit from our employment springs ;
We *study beings, substances, and things*.

Behold the restless tribe—in ev'ry part
They torture nature by the rules of art.
Some sever worms, to see how they can thrive
On mutilation—two whole halves alive ;

* See the curious collection of parallel thoughts and expressions in passages collected from various authors, which have appeared in the works of critics and in the magazines ; in some of which scarcely a distant resemblance can be traced.

† This has no allusion to just and candid criticism, but to such captiousness as condemned the poems of Cowper on their first appearance ; and as lately remarked (not in the *Monthly Review*) “ some persons think Mr. Hayley a poet.”

The Virtuoso.

Or boil a lot of snails, that curious men
 May know how snails bear scalding now and then ;
 Or put the eyes of bats out, just to try
 How neatly, blinded, bats contrive to fly ;
 Or living frogs dissect, to prove how much
 Their nerves may tremble at galvanic touch ;
 Or pare a fish, to satisfy a whim
 How fish, without their fins or bladders, swim :
 Or, from a dog, some vital organ steal,
 To see them live, or languish by piece-meal !*

Some spend a life in classing grubs, or try,
 New methods to impale a butterfly : 560
 Or bottled up in spirits, keep with care
 A croud of reptiles, hideously rare !
 While others search the mould'ring wrecks of time,
 And drag their stores from dust, and rust, and slime.
 Coins eat with canker, medals half defac'd,
 And broken tablets, never to be trac'd ;
 Worm-eaten trinkets, thrown away of old,
 And broken pipkins, form'd in antique mould ;

* However absurd or cruel such experiments may seem, to the humane, or unphilosophical reader, there is not an instance mentioned in the above lines, but what actually has been tried, and the results minutely related in philosophical transactions, or, in periodical works of information.

The Chymist.

Huge limbless statues—busts of heads forgot,
 And paintings, representing none knows what. 570
 Strange legends, that to monstrous fables lead,
 And manuscripts that nobody can read.
 The shapeless forms, from savage hands that sprung,
 And fragments of rude art, when art was young.
 This precious lumber labell'd, shelv'd, and cas'd,
 And with the title of Museum grac'd
 Shews how a man may time and fortune waste,
 And die, a mummied connoisseur of taste !

Not so, old Limbeck, he with patient skill,
 Hangs o'er his furnace, regulates his still.* 580
 He makes or mends, combines, contrives, prepares,
 All sorts of atmospheres, all kind of airs ;
 With cruel names he suffocates our breath,
Oxygenates, phlogisticates to death !
 Condenses air to artificial rain,
 Then rarifies to air those drops again ;
 Choaks up the lungs with vapours thick and gross,
 Or makes them pant to catch the scanty dose :
 With medicated steams our room bedews,
 And in a sweltering bath the suff'rer stews. 590

* People who are fond of good air, and have no objection to understand what it is made of, have been very prettily puzzled by the long disputes between the late Dr. Priestly and the French chemist, *M. Lavoisier*.

The Tourist.

As some poor mouse, beneath the air-pumps play
In vacuum gasps, and longs to get away ;
Half-stifled, we the lab'rary fly,
To breathe pure air, beneath an open sky.

'Tis sweet to catch the incense-breathing morn,
And range through wood and dale, o'er hill and lawn.

So say our tourists, rambling wide to trace
Near home discov'ries—pest'ring ev'ry place.
Equipp'd with knapsacks, trudging here and there,
Like pedlars, posting to a country fair ; 600
Or perch'd on coach-roof, view the novel scene,
How uplands rise, and vallies lie between ;
Or down some river's stream meand'ring glide,
And find that there is land on either side :
Who see old castles where they long have stood,
And feast on ruins—antiquarian food :
Perceive that Scotland to the northward lies,
And that in Wales huge barren mountains rise :
That Ireland is an island, where abound
Bogs, hogs, and dogs, and fogs, the whole year round :
That poor folk there, for want of bread and meat,
With buttermilk their boil'd potatoes eat.
These things made out, a pompous book must show,
What much it must concern the world to know ;
How far they walk'd—where halted—din'd and slept ;
What inns—good meat—good wine---good lodgings
kept ;

 Alterations.

What dangers, what fatigues they underwent,
And wore their shoes out---and their money spent.

Wherever round this restless world we range,
Nothing seems constant, saving constant change. 620
Like some magician waving mystic wand,
Improvement metamorphoses the land ;
Grubs up, pulls down, then plants and builds anew,
Till scenes once lov'd, are banished from our view.
The venerable elms, whose boughs had made
From winds a shelter, and from heat a shade ;
That form'd a vista, arch'd with living green,
Thro' which the distant Seat was grandly seen ;
Where cawing rooks were wont their nests to throng,
And feather'd minstrels thrill'd their morning song ;
Where Contemplation silent, soft, and slow,
Pac'd o'er the downy moss, that spread below.
These all have fled like painted scenes away ;
And all lies open to the glare of day : 634
In naked pride the mansion stands alone,
Scorch'd by the sun, and by the tempest blown !
'The draughtsman, with officious eye surveys
What *capabilities* a scite displays,*

* A capacious gentleman, who has vast capacity in discovering what alterations a place is capable of, has been honored with the title of Capability. B.

The Cottage.

How things may be made *better* for the *worse*,
And much improve---at least the schemer's purse.

No paths direct for modern taste will serve,
The line of beauty always makes a curve;
Hence we must patient wander round about
A zig-zag track, to find the dwelling out;
Lost in a clump, or tangled in a maze,
The nightly visitant bewilder'd strays;
Frets half an hour away in useless haste,
To traverse fifty yards of puzzling waste. 648

The pond, that flow'd refreshing o'er its brim,
Where white-rob'd swans in pomp were wont to swim;
Where sportive fish would dart their liquid way,
And glance from silvery sides the solar ray,
Huge loads of rubbish must on sudden fill,
And bury it beneath a dirty hill.

The road-side cottage, with its garden neat,
The peasant's castle, industry's retreat :
That gave the humble hind the chearing claim,
To "local habitation and a name ;"
Where grew his boys and girls, an hardy race,
Who grateful toil'd, and blest their native place ;
Where ev'ry year the fatted hog was slain,
And broods of chickens throve on gleaned grain ;
Improv'ment sweeps away---a nuisance great
That clogs with poverty, my lord's estate. 664

Large Farms.

The little farms, that spangled o'er the lands
With hospitable roofs, and lab'ring hands,
Diffusing population far and wide,
With sweet content, that scorn'd the frown of pride,
Whose flocks and fields, and barns, and dairies gave
Those rich, yet cheap supplies the markets crave;
Which made not plenteous crops a mould'ring store,
Nor held God's bounty from his starving poor.
These, each succeeding each, now swell the bounds
Of huge monopolists of neighb'ring grounds.

So greedy Ahab coveted to gain
Poor Naboth's vineyard, bordering his domain;
Mark'd out the Jezreelite for royal prey,
And snatch'd his heritage and life away!

The air, the light, the water, and the earth,
Appear man's common right, his claim by birth; 680
Hence he who holds the soil, but holds in *trust*
A *stewardship* demanding usage just;
Is bound by nature; by its Author bound
To till and fructify the fallow ground;
To share those gifts he could not raise alone,
And in the gen'ral good promote his own.

Who holds fat farms should something fat produce,
Some palliation of high wealth's abuse ;*

* " Who drives fat oxen should himself be fat."

Fat Cattle.

Behold they come, like Pharaoh's well-fed kine !
Huge oxen, monstrous sheep, and bloated swine ; 690
They come, dragg'd on in proud unwieldy state,
For their own legs, but half sustain their weight ;
Like tallow hogsheads stow'd within a cart,
They ride to win the prize at Smithfield mart.
Improvement mends the stock, the skin, the fleece
But stands pre-eminent in clods of *grease*.

Behold, ye poor, who oft with longing eye,
Survey those joints, ye wish in vain to buy ;
Behold, display'd in greasy pomp around,
'Those giant-limbs—at half-a-crown a pound ; 700
The shambles spread a tantalizing treat
That few can *purchase*, and still fewer eat.

Ye men of candles, ye whose works give light
And artificial day to gloomy night ;
These are your spoils, for you the monsters grew,
Were cramm'd, and cook'd, and melted down for you ;
'The christmas-roast like oozing blubber ran,
To fill your tributary dripping-pan.

Amid our follies one wish reigns supreme,
The thirst for riches, sudden, and extreme ; 710
Hence doubly favor'd, golden schemes appear,
To kindle public av'rice twice a year ;
'The Lott'ry throws abroad its splendid bait,
To tempt the world to try the wheels of fate.

The Lottery.

Thus gambling, like infection, spreads around ;
All hope to catch the twenty thousand pound :
Hence those who want a guinea, think it wise
To risk that guinea, for so great a prize !
Part with their clothes, their bed, their very food,
To gain a chance of some uncertain good ; 720
Then comes a blank—and with it comes distress,
Poor blasted hope, and shiv'ring wretchedness !
Here too, the useless sums the wealthy lose,
Bids them, her boon, to charity refuse.
In vain, may mercy plead, or mis'ry cry ;
For how can people *gire*, who *tickets buy*.
In vain the wise and cautious stand aloof,
The crazy populace are wisdom-proof.
No matter, so the minister can raise
Fresh sums—how morals sink or worth decays. 730

Fatigu'd at length, the Muse resigns the chase,
In search of nobler themes her song to grace ;
Leaves yet a thousand fooleries in view,
For bolder bards to smite, with aim more true.

Oh, that some British Juvenal might rise,
Keen as the ancient bard, yet chastly wise !
Whose stroke might wound the loftiest vice of pride,
And make those shrink, who dread no lash beside !
Or, sportive, raise on *folly's* cheek a blush,
Beneath the law, or pulpits' sober touch. 740

National Happiness.

Or strip from base *hypocrisy* the mask,
When modest, candid truth, declines the task ;
Or bring *oppression's* iron heart to feel,
And make *corruption* be asham'd to steal ;
That shall the dormant public mind awake,
Indignantly, *delusion's* bands to break :
Then may *Religion's* voice be understood,
'That *nations to be happy, must be good!*

END OF PART II.



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THE
AGE OF FRIVOLITY.

PART III.

RELIGION.

AS when some cautious gen'ral leads along
His raw recruits, to meet the hostile throng ;
Or ere the grand attack,—in skirmish light
He tries their skill, and trains them to the fight.

So has the Muse been skirmishing awhile,
O'er bog and hill, thro' ditch, and dark defile ;
Sought Pleasure's light arm'd troops to overtake,
And Occupation's heavy ranks to break.

An harder toil remains to be perform'd :

The citadel must be attack'd, and storm'd.

10

Religion, sacred gift ! by Heav'n design'd
Man's first distinction, noblest proof of mind ;
The erring spirit's surest guide and stay,
Through life's uncertain, dreary, trackless way :
Sweet consolation of the suff'ers' woe,
And source of purest joys, that mortals know ;

True Religion.

That gives the raging conscience peaceful calm,
And sooths the broken heart with healing balm !
That solves the doubts the anxious spirit feels,
And endless life to dying man reveals ! 20
That makes his duty to his neighbour known,
And that pure worship God receives alone ;
Sure evidence of things beyond our sight ;
Eternal Justice, and the World of Light !
Most simple, yet mysterious—deep, yet clear,
Combining chearful hope with humble fear ;
Awful and holy, firm as Heav'n's decree,
Yet lowly, lovely, gen'rous, kind, and free !

This sacred gift, with grace and wisdom fraught,
Is made a plaything—a mere thing of nought ! 30
A nose of wax, that any fool, with ease,
May twist and model as his whim shall please !

Frivolity, officious, vain, and bold,
Defiles the ark, like Uzzah's touch, of old ;
Things most divine, pollutes with base conceit,
As flies corrupt and taint the purest meat !

Oh ! for a prophet's zeal, a seraph's light,
To trace these foes and put their hosts to flight !
Spirit of Truth, thine humble suppliant aid,
Nor let the verse the lofty theme degrade ! 40

First in the ranks, the Infidel appears,
To scout religion with his jokes and sneers ;

The Infidel.

Fix'd in the scorner's chair, he proudly sits,
The prince of madmen, and the god of wits ;
His stubborn ignorance disdains to bend
To truths, or facts, he cannot comprehend :
Hence in proportion as his light is small,
He has but little faith, or none at all !
Thus Paine the bible treats with jests profane,
Because the bible suits not Thomas Paine. 50

With these presumptuous blockheads close allied,
Are vain Philosophy and sceptic Pride :
Of reason vast, and high intelligence,
They madly boast, while wanting common sense.
Eternal Truth their impious creed denies,
But swells with gross absurdities and lies ;
How matter floating in unbounded space,
In endless atoms held eternal chase ;
'Till by mere accident together bound
This Earth was form'd, and all the planets round ; 60
To lucky life, each class of creatures rose,
With ev'ry herb and flow'r, and tree that grows :
And this blind Chance with most consummate skill,
Preserves all Nature's wheels from standing still !

How can, say they, a Being, good or wise,
Have made a world his creatures must despise ?
Where mis'ry in each dreadful form appears,
Pursuing mortals through a vale of tears !

Worldly Wisdom.

Where suff'ring Virtue uselessly complains,
While mischief triumphs, and disorder reigns ; 70
Where nipping frosts destroy the infant bloom,
And beasts of blood the harmless tribes consume !*

Hence him they deem the wisest, happiest man,
Who grasps what wealth, and tastes what joys he can !
No matter what the means, the end but clear ;
Virtue has nought to hope, nor vice to fear.
Religious penalties, they reckon tools
For priests to work with, on the minds of fools ;
While Revelation's sacred themes they treat
As rank delusion—a mere pious cheat ! 80

So might some little nauseous insect crawl
Where Raphael's figures decorate the wall ;
Whose tiny head might catch a tint or line,
But ne'er could comprehend the whole design :
Then, o'er his inch of prospect proudly strain,
And deem the whole a rough unshapen stain ;
View the bold strokes, and mingled colours near,
And wonder what sad chance made such a smear !

These open foes religious Truth defies ;
At once can pity, vanquish, and despise ! 90

* It is not intended even to hint at the various absurd systems and notions of philosophy, falsely so called, but from one hypothesis long held and argued by learned men, to shew the fallacy of human wisdom without revelation.

The Apostles.

But there are secret enemies, who bear
A treach'rous heart, beneath a cov'ring fair !
Who, conscious of deceit, the cause betray,
Or self-deceiv'd, go heedlessly astray.
'These to Religion cling with vile embrace,
Usurp its credit, but reflect disgrace :
Like an huge fungus on some fruitful tree,
Loathsome to smell, offensive there to see.

God sends to erring Man his holy word,
But not in thunders, such as Sinai heard ; 100
Nor speaks the joyful sound by seraphs pure,
They feel not man's disease, nor need his cure :
But men of passions like our own employs,
Who share our common frailties, griefs, and joys.

Constrain'd by love, with holy ardour fir'd,
By truth enlighten'd, and by God inspir'd ;
The first disciples spread the Saviour's name,
Proclaim'd the Cross, and triumph'd o'er the shame.
These were not hirelings urg'd by fees alone,
To plead a cause unvalu'd, and unknown ; 110
Nor did they play the actors' specious part,
Or truth deform with meretricious art.
Plain was their speech, yet most sublime their theme,
And meek their patience—tried by rage extreme :
Their work was doing good, and their reward
Was souls renew'd—and their approving Lord.

The Simonist and Pluralist.

Their holy lives the truth exemplified ;
Their death its glories, when they martyrs died.
Mark their successors, what a diff'rent race,
Who claim their name, but want their every grace!

Behold the Simonist—by money's aid
He makes of godliness a gainful trade ;
He likes Religion for its worldly use,
And buys a church for what it may produce ;
His parish is his farm, a life-long lease,
And much he loves his flock—that is their fleece.

The Pluralist in labour deals at large,
Adds church to church, and heaps up charge on
charge !

Courageous man, who for himself prepares
Such heavy loads, and such an host of cares ; 130
Such awful duties, such engagements vast,
And such responsibility at last.

What ardent zeal must in his bosom glow !
How must his heart with mercy's milk o'erflow !
What stores of knowledge must his head contain,
Beyond the grasp of many a common brain !
With what deep studies, and what stretch of thought,
Must his unceasing pulpit toils be wrought !
Within himself what talents must he see
To fit *one parson* for the work of *three*. 140

The lazy and polite Divines.

Thus must it be, had patrons grace or wit,
And men and stations were but made to fit :
But modern times shew shorter ways than these,
To reach preferment, and there bask at ease.

Thus Lupus plump and sleek enjoys repose,
Admires the church, and all the church bestows ;
Devoutly heresies, and errors hates,
And bars against schismatics heaven's gates.
He is not Duty's drudge on sabbath days,
For he by proxy preaches, thinks, and prays : 150
Yet holds that all good things become a priest,
Who, with three livings, should *live well* at least.
Hence ev'ry day luxuriously he fares,
And drowns in good red-port all worldly cares.
His limbs robust, no rude exertion tires,
Save, when he joins the hunt with neighb'ring squires ;
His slumb'ring mind no knotty point pursues,
Save, when contending for his tythes or dues :
His useless office fills no sacred rite,
Save, saying grace, when parish feasts invite. 160

See in Pomposo a polite divine
More gay than grave, not half so sound as fine :
The ladies' parson, proudly skill'd is he,
To tend their toilette, and pour out their tea ;
Foremost to lead the dance, or patient sit,
And deal the cards out, or deal out small wit.

The Pedant.

Then oh ! in public what a perfect beau,
So powder'd and so trimm'd for pulpit-show ;
So well equipp'd to tickle ears polite,
With pretty little subjects, short and trite ; 170
Well cull'd and garbled, from the good old store
Of polish'd sermons, often preached before :
With precious scraps from moral Shakespear brought
To fill up awkward vacancies of thought ;
Or shew, how he the orator can play,
Whene'er he meets with some good things to say,
Or prove his taste correct, his mem'ry strong,
Nor let his fifteen minutes seem too long.

Behold Pedanticus, of letter'd pride,
The world's great oracle, the critic's guide ! 180
So thinks he, while alas ! the world remains
But little better'd by his skill or pains !
In vain he labours over classic ground,
Ascends its heights, and dives its depth profound ;
Finds out old notions long to darkness cast ;
The senseless jargon of blind ages past ;
Revives forgotten errors, and anew,
Regilds the truth, to make it seem more true.

Rich with his stores the preacher mounts on high,
And labours hard to prove, what none deny ; 190
Dissects his subject with a skilful hand,
And much explains, what none can understand :

The Sectarie.

Shews how things said in Latin, or in Greek,
Sound well enough, when smooth-tongued linguists
 speak.

While many a text by skill scholastic bent,
Gives many a meaning, which it never meant.
Then what the fathers said—and what denied,
And what they did not say—must all be tried.
Long hard-mouth'd words, and sentences obscure,
Amuse the rich, but much confound the poor, 200
Who patient sit like pris'ners in the dark,
And long to hear the more melodious clerk.

Not in the church alone are triflers found,
Who stand *confirm'd* on *consecrated* ground ;
Whose station rests not on a people's choice,
Nor comforts vanish at a deacon's voice :
Who feel themselves sufficiently at ease
To preach whate'er they like, howe'er they please.

The sectaries, who seek for abler guides
Than those which custom gives, or law provides, 210
Who boast a plainer worship, purer creed,
From popish dross, and superstition freed :
E'en these, tho' widely differing, each can find,
Some mode of pious trifling to their mind,
Some little arts, to aid their *sep'rate* cause,
To catch attention, or extort applause.

The young Preacher.

Forth from his nest, behold a stripling springs,
Half fledg'd, and fluttering yet on feeble wings ;
But rashly confident, and pertly vain,
And proud of singing, twitters many a strain. 220
His dawning talents might by wise delay
Grow into excellence some future day :
But early flattery too oft destroys
All modest diffidence in forward boys ;
Warms twigs of genius to luxuriance wild,
And spoils, like mothers fond, a darling child.

See yonder chapel—what a croud appears,
Not by devotion drawn, but *itching* ears :
What motive pressing like an engine strong
Has squeez'd together such a sweltering throng ? 230
'Tis curiosity—not love of truth—
To hear grey wisdom speak from beardless youth !

Fathers in Christ, by long experience wise,
Who pitying human weakness, pride despise ;
Retiring, dignified restrain your tongue,
No longer courted, now no longer young :
Ye know how soon the puff of fame shall fail,
And die at evening, like the summer's gale !
How oft a senseless mob their idols crown,
Bow at their feet, then basely tread them down !
How soon their satiated fancy tires
And other wonders still more *strange* requires.

Novelties.

Thus wisely judging how to keep renown,
Ere folks grow weary, Ramble quits the town :
Darts through the country with a meteor's blaze,
And fills his track with thunder and amaze ;
Repeats old jokes, and worn out tales renews,
And shakes with titt'ring worshippers the pews ;
Exhibits that rare art attained by few,
To make men *merry* and religious too. 250

So, now and then, the country parson quits
His rustic flock, to preach to wealthy cits.
He comes—lo ! crowded churches spread his fame,
And praise the Doctor's—not the Saviour's name.

Say what the phantom fickle minds pursue,
Not truth, nor godliness—but *something new*.
Through christian lands th' Athenian thirst may
range

For ceaseless novelty, and constant change :
As fev'rish appetites that loath plain meat,
Are by fresh niceties induced to eat. 260

More trifling still, if ought can be more vain,
Is the blind bigot dragg'd in party's train :
By non-essentials held in bondage fast,
As the blind Indian dares not quit his cast.

Religion is the same, howe'er we move ;
Its laws are liberty, its spirit love :

The Bigot.

One God it worships, and one faith allows ;
To one obedience yields baptismal vows ;
Owns one design—to mend a world like this,
And ends in one eternal world of bliss! 270
Tho' varying oft in form, and mode, and name,
Its *essence*, and its *substance*, are the same.
But Party, which exclusive right pretends,
Christ's seamless garment into fragments rends ;
All add some scrap to tatters of their own,
Then boast the sacred vestment, their's alone !
Like clans distinguish'd by the badge they bear,
As different servants different liv'ries wear.
Thus Corinth had its partizans of old,
With zeal as flaming as their love was cold : 280
Some cry'd up Paul, and some Apollos prais'd,
And some for Cephass clam'rous voices rais'd ;
Till on the waves of fierce contention tost,
Their ark was founder'd, Christ and Truth were lost !

We prize, and justly, liberty of thought,
A faith *unforc'd*, *unfetter'd*, and *unbought*.
A British conscience feels its native right,
To judge and act, according to its *light* ;
Beneath our fig-tree, fearless joys to sit,
And train our vines to grow as we think fit. 290

Our fathers nobly bled—for freedom's sake
Endur'd the prison, and defied the stake.

Fanaticism.

Oh, this was glorious! yet from hence proceeds
The head bewilder'd, and the heart that bleeds !
Their trifling sons the sacred trust receive,
Disputing much the little they believe.
Sects rise on sects—divide—then subdivide,
Each other scorning with true bigot pride ;
Like hostile ranks for vict'ry they contend,
Defaming most the doctrine they defend : 300
And vainly daring, blindly lead the blind,
And mend, or make, the gospel to their mind ;
Or, claiming kindred with the faithful, stay,
And Judas like, with " Master, hail," betray,
As rav'nous wolves who near the pastures keep,
To watch the flocks, and seize on wand'ring sheep.
Still, silly sheep, from guarded pastures stray,
Rush to their jaws, and fall a willing prey.

When frantic Swedenborg his dreams reveals,
Or daring Southcot, barter heav'nly seals, 310
Some kindred madmen on the tales rely ;
Some hare-brain'd sisters the imposture buy.

When crazy Brothers thought his rambling head
To visions wild by inspiration led,
Commenc'd a prophet—told of things to come,
The wrath of Heav'n—the nation's dreadful doom,
And scribbled nonsense fast as fools could read—
Still simpletons arose to own his creed !

Diotrephes.

Empires must fall, and conquer'd kings be chain'd,
Till he sole monarch of the Jews remain'd : 320
To Judah's land, the vagrant tribes restor'd,
Shall hail him their Messiah—Earth's great lord.

Ah ! now he reigns, where wretched maniacs dwell,
And none dispute his title to his cell.*

Less innocent, but more mischievous far,
Diotrephes maintains fierce wordy war.
He cannot plead insanity's excuse
For heart-deep rancor, unprovok'd abuse.
Proud of his meanness—glorying in his shame,
He builds on boasted ignorance his fame. 330
Coarse as a coal-sack, rugged as a bear,
Possessing impudence a ten-fold share.
Devoid of meekness, modesty, or love,
A serpent keen, but not an harmless dove :
His venom all around he strives to fling,
And hisses vengeance where he cannot sting ;
To stir up strife each little art employs,
Divides the church, and then the church destroys ;

* These melancholy instances of human folly would have been beneath notice, only as they serve to shew to what lengths of absurdity and even blasphemy, ignorant persons may be carried when they resign themselves to the guidance of fanaticism,

Discord.

Builds up his Babel on his neighbours' grounds,
 And smiles malignant at the peace he wounds; 340
 Thrives on confusion, and from discord reaps
 Hot-headed partizans and golden heaps.
 Thus Cornish wreckmen lure a ship to shore,
 Secure their plunder and look out for more.

Yet wonder not at feeble men he rails,
 Who sacred things presumptuously assails,
 Distorts Religion into forms uncouth,
 And dares to trifle with eternal Truth !
 Though hating with a Vandal's rage profane,
 That lib'ral learning he could never gain : 350
 Though yet a stranger to his native tongue,
 A very blockhead, learned men among,
 He fain among the ignorant would shine
 An able critic, and a deep divine.
 The sacred text in simple beauty penn'd,
 That he who runs may read and comprehend,
 He tortures into notions wild and new,
 Things only guess'd at by the favour'd few.*

* The following just remarks are made by the Rev. Richard Lloyd in his Christian Theology.

“ There are some who seem to affix no boundaries to their wild imaginations. Every minute circumstance of the Jewish ritual overflows with evangelical instruction, and is the foundation of some most important doctrine. The plain history is

 Allegorizing.

Thus hist'ries plain, from allegories strange,
 And metaphors, to facts and doctrines change. 360
 Thick on his hearers' heads the wonders pour
 Of mystic meanings never found before.
 The puzzled crowds admire to find a text
 They thought so easy, curiously perplex;
 Resign their understandings, following fast
 A will-o'-wisp, to some deep quag at last.

If he does well, who humbly strives to show
 What scripture means, and man concerns to know,
 What skill superior must that man display,
 Who makes it speak the things it *does not* say ! 370

turned into allegory; the very geography of the Old Testament teems with spiritual allusions : the common sayings and actions of the patriarchs are refin'd into mysteries ; and to the *general* expressions of scripture they annex a deep and recondite meaning ; and this occult and mysterious sense is often not only different from, but even opposite to the obvious and literal sense of the words. Thus the christian religion is too often burlesqued. Instead of being clothed with venerable simplicity, and speaking the " words of truth and soberness," it is mutilated and deformed, and called in only to sanction the reveries of a sickly and distempered imagination ; it is no longer a sure and certain light to guide the benighted traveller through the dark mazes of human life, but an *ignis fatuus*, an airy phantom, floating at the mercy of the winds, without any determinate end or direction.

Loud and low Preachers.

Bold Boist'rous takes an energetic course,
Devoid of skill, his fame depends on force.
His leathern lungs and throat he well employs
To make in this dull world a mighty noise ;
His pow'rful sermons, void of sense or form,
Burst like a whirlwind in a bellowing storm.
Hell and damnation from his lips rebound,
To scare poor sinners with the *joyful* sound !
He scorns soft arts, nor squeamish critic dreads,
But beats it fairly through his hearers' heads. 380
The senseless crowd the loud confusion feel,
Mistake the uproar, and misname it zeal ;
Work'd up to frenzy, think themselves devout,
Because much terrified, and much in doubt.

Good Doctor Lumpish shudders while he hears
The din that shocks his nerves and splits his ears.
No glowing zeal e'er warm'd his frozen breast,
No emulation ever broke his rest ;
No flights of fancy lead his soul astray,
From Custom's common track and hackney'd way.
As cold as ice, and ponderous as lead,
His pulpit-cushion forms his drowsy bed ;
Nor chearful smile is suffer'd to displace
His grim solemnity of solid face.
With nose bespectacled, and head incas'd
In bushy wig, by no trim curls disgrac'd,

The worldly Professor.

Beneath his ample chin a stiff-starch'd band,
 Firm as a statue, see his Rev'ence stand ;
 His sermon dribbling out, with drawling tone,
 Like water, oozing thro' a dripping-stone, 400
 Till with the dull monotony opprest
 One half his audience doze away to rest :
 Still like a mill-horse, he pursues his round
 Of doctrine deep, and orthodoxy sound.
 Yet, tho' he splits his subjects to an hair,
 Few comprehend him, and still fewer care.

As are the priests, so are the people found,
 An heterogenous mass, a vile compound.
 A mixture that no title can express,
 A strange no character of *nothingness*. 410
 So like the world, that world may well suppose
 Religion and itself, no longer foes ;
 As proud, as gay, extravagant and vain,
 Tho' not as yet so openly profane.

Demas was pious, humble, and sincere,
 And gen'rous once, with fifty pounds a-year ;
 Could in his garret, entertain his friend,
 And of his little freely give, or lend.
 His heart was warm, his head but little knew,
 Yet was his faith sincere, his practice true. 420
 At length, increas'd in knowledge and in gold,
 His head is wise, but oh ! his heart is cold ;

The talkative Professor.

Still he attends the word, and keeps his pew,
 Gives God the sabbath, and pays man his due ;
 Is sober, careful, temperate, and grave,
 And every thing besides—that tends to *save*.
 Firm to retain, and eager to receive,
 But much abhors to lend, and more to give ;
 Contemns the poor, and thinks that he who craves
 Must class with blockheads, or be rank'd with
 knaves. 430

Assists no church, and pays no parson's fee,
 Because the gospel should be *cheap* and *free*.
 He bears no fruit, nor can enjoyment taste,
 Lives but to hoard, and only hoards to waste :
 Religion's stumbling-block, and Reason's scorn,
 Friendless he lives, and dies a wretch forlorn !

Gabble can talk, can argue and dispute,
 And oft confound whom he can ne'er confute.
 He through his string of sentiments proceeds,
 As monks, who measur'd piety by beads. 440
 In blind conceit more wise than sages sev'n—
 A self-made privy-counsellor of Heav'n.
 He settles arguments as things of course,
 And murders mysteries without remorse.
 Eternal counsels, and divine decrees,
 He re-determines with amazing ease.

The fashionable Professor.

Those points that learned skill in vain have tried,
And grave divines presume not to decide,
He cuts asunder with officious hands,
Most confident, where least he understands. 450
He talks of sermons, and can scripture quote,
As children read their alphabet, by rote.
His whole religion, from his mem'ry sprung,
Consists in words, and dwells upon his tongue ;
He nothing *knows*, and nothing good *affords*,
And nothing *feels*, and nothing *is*, but *words*.

Not so, Vanissa—she, religious dame,
Gives to Devotion something more than name ;
Is lib'ral, candid, charitable, kind,
And to her neighbours' " faults, a little blind : " 460
Has gone to worship constant from her youth,
And treats her ministers, and loves the truth.
Yet can Vanissa with the world comply,
When sabbath-day is past, nor pastor nigh ;
First in the fashion, when for visits drest,
As *gaudy* and as *naked* as the rest.
She acts with casuist skill a double part,
Lives like the world, but means for God her heart ;
Owns all is worthless vanity below,
Yet loves to *taste* and *see* that it is so. 470
Hence public Pleasure her attention shares
With godly sermons, solemn hymns and pray'rs.

The Enthusiast.

Giddy at routs, and gay at midnight balls,
But grave within the church, or meeting-walls.
Pleas'd with the theatre's unreal scenes,
Yet joins Devotion's most impressive means.
She proves Religion, carelessly profest,
Is but a painted mask, a solemn jest.
Between these wide extremes one point is clear—
She is in neither settled, or sincere. 480

Good mistress Luna strokes her wrinkled face,
And hates such christians, thus devoid of grace :
She treats the world with scorn, and justly so,
For it neglected her long time ago :
Felt no attraction from her youthful charms,
Nor gave one suitor to her longing arms.
Grown somewhat old, and done with earthly love,
Her warm affections fly to things above ;
Enthusiastic, fanciful, and wild,
By vacant head, and feelings keen beguil'd, 490
She, Reason's aid, and sober Faith disdains,
And wings her way to visionary plains,
Where vap'rous light thro' endless mazes gleams
On raptures, extacies and airy dreams.
Her whole religion little else contains
But *notions* floating on disorder'd brains ;
Its whole experience, whimsies undefin'd,
The strange emotions of a feeble mind :

The Formalist.

Its worship, mere effusions of self-will,
And all its practice ends in sitting still. 500
The humbler duties, gen'rous, meek, and kind,
She leaves to meaner souls, who lag behind.
Neglects herself, her friends, the church, the poor,
To keep, from earthly taint and contact, pure.
In dress a Slattern, and in manners rude ;
A self-deceiv'd, disgusting, pious prude.

Old Formal on a different plan proceeds ;
His trust is merit high, and righteous deeds.
He to no faith with bigot zeal is wed ;
That subject never yet disturb'd his head ; 510
Nor feels he of experience any part,
For his religion reaches not the heart !
Nor love to God, nor man his spirit warms,
For his devotion rests on rites and forms.
Constant, as Sunday comes, his church he tends,
And once a quarter at the altar bends ;
Wears black all Lent, and gloomy penance joins,
And twice a week on fish devoutly dines ;
Minds Holy Thursday, like great folks at home,
And keeps Good Friday, like the priests at Rome.
Reads o'er his pray'rs, and strives his creed to say,
And does not grumble much his tythes to pay ;
On fast-days starves his house with zeal severe,
And would not miss one saint's-day thro' the year.

The sour Professor.

These, and such things perform'd, his task is done ;
Heav'n must be satisfied, and glory won.

He hears the humble penitent confess
His inward guilt, his nature's wretchedness,
And scorns a mourner so deprav'd and mad,
And thanks his God, he never was so *bad*. 530
He hears the honest saint his failings own,
Those imperfections known to God alone,
And prides himself with pharisaic bliss,
That he ne'er broke the law, nor did amiss.

Blunt Surly, forms and ceremonies views
As things but fit for *papishes* and *Jews*.
He would not e'en for Peace or Mercy's sake
His least precise ungracious manner break ;
Nor in the least conform at Custom's call
In things the most indifferent and small. 540
Politeness, fashion, polish'd ease, or grace,
The docile temper, and the smiling face,
However pleasant, innocent or pure,
Offend his sanctity of look demure.
These things, he says, are carnal cov'rings thin,
Marks of the beast without, and fiend within.

With scowling brow, and angry tone, he blames
The cheerful joy that beams from happier frames.
His rude rebukes no neighbour's fault can spare,
But stings the broken-hearted to despair. 550

The supple Professor.

Morose, severe, unsocial and unblest,
 Restless himself, and suff'ring none to rest.
 A persecuting spirit, sharp and sour,
 A very Bonner, only wanting pow'r.
 Profuse, dogmatic, positive and dull,
 Still rancor flows, and still his heart is full.
 Woe to the man who cannot hear him out,
 Or dares his schemes infallible, to doubt :
 Thick on his head anathemas descend,
 And awful curses, without hope, or end ! 560

His presence brings a gloom and strikes dismay,
 As some black cloud that dims the face of day ;
 Youth drops its mirth, and chatt'ring dames grow
 dumb,

As when Torpedo strokes the limbs benumb.
 He seems, by Satan plac'd, in grim array,
 Religion's *scarecrow*, fright'ning folks away.

Not so, smooth Supple, he, good soul, is *lax*,
 Takes any shape, and yields like melted wax.
 His gentle lips in sweetest accents move,
 On Candour, Liberality, and Love.
 With him all forms and notions are the same,
 Deserving much of praise, with little blame.
 Each devious track, 'he thinks to truth may lead ;
 For he, as yet, has not made up his creed. 570

Indifference.

It matters not, he says, what men believe,
If they but readily fresh light receive ;
'Tho' blown about by ev'ry changing blast,
By moving oft, they may fix right, at last.
As men grow taller, they enlarge their views,
Shake off their prejudice and boldly chuse ; 580
And *that*. Religion is to him the best,
That he best *likes*, and singles from the rest.
Opinion like the air, must needs be free ;
Men cannot credit what they cannot see.
As man thro' weakness endless errors makes,
God will not hate us for a few mistakes.
Mysterious faith, may slaves or fools affright :
" But he cannot be wrong, whose life is right."
Who holds a doctrine, is pre-occupied,
And shuts his eyes to every light beside : 590
But when his judgment still unclogg'd remains,
Who where he can, believes, where not, refrains,
His soul, like pure white paper, waits to bear
Truth's own impression, copied full and fair.
So Supple reasons, waits, and tries his skill ;
Still unconvinc'd, and boasting candour still.
But vain the boast, a vacant heart supplies,
'Tis nothing but *Indiff"rence* in disguise.

Thus men will trifle with their souls and God,
Laugh at his word, and sport beneath his rod ! 600

The Fast-Day.

Chastis'd by Heav'n, and plung'd in war and blood,
O'erwhelm'd by folly, like a raging flood,
By statesmen plunder'd and by faction torn,
We feel some sense of shame, some cause to mourn.
Hence comes a fast-day, and a form of pray'r,
To shew just Heav'n how penitent we are.
Yet we can triumph while we seem to pray,
And mock th' Almighty in a solemn way :
Can shew our pride while humbled in the dust,
Ask God for aid, yet put in man our trust ! 610
Confess our crimes, and sue to be forgiv'n,
Yet boast our worthiness to angry Heav'n !

What hosts of sermons from the press proceed,
That few heard preach'd, and fewer still will read.
These, lash with gentle hand, our nation's crimes,
Yet threaten with portentous signs, the times ;
Tell of black clouds that spread our hemisphere,
And awful judgments, that perhaps are near.
Still one great comfort mingles with the curse,
Bad as we are, our neighbours are much *worse*. 620
Hence we shake off humility and dread,
Postpone reform, and rear a wanton head :
Launch out God's thunderbolts against our foes,
And lull ourselves to pleasure and repose :
Claim heav'n, as on our side, and in its name,
And on our knees, the blast of war proclaim.

Abounding Vices.

The day once past, our solemn garb we quit,
As gladly as men lose an ague-fit.
Once in a year, we own our guilt and shame,
Profess amendment, then remain the same. 630
Still the throng'd public haunts prove sorrow brief,
And shew how folks make merry with their grief.
Do vacant theatres of loss complain—
'That men grown wise, from vanity refrain ?
Does pamper'd Luxury forbear to waste,
Because the poor should heav'n's good bounty taste ?
Does rash Intemperance forego excess,
One wretched heart with cheering wine to bless ?
Does wild Extravagance withhold its hand,
Because its debts and honesty demand ? 640
Do Pride and Pomp put off their vain display,
In sober justice tradesmen's bills to pay ?
Do all professors, with an heart sincere,
Avoid the world, and keep a conscience clear ?
Alas, with goodly words our lips we fill,
But prove, by practice, we are triflers still !

Yet, in the land some righteous souls are found,
With minds most humble, and of morals sound.
These, in the gap, like fervent Moses stand,
And plead like Ab'ram for a guilty land. 650
These mourn in secret o'er a nation's pride,
And turn by pray'r the vengeful stroke aside.

The good Curate.

The world contemns them, but it little knows
How much to their regard and worth it owes ;
How much they strive its blessings to increase,
Lament its woes, and labour for its peace,

Mark yonder Curate of the good old stock,
The humble teacher of a village flock.
In youth he furnish'd well his studious head,
With all the Greek and Latin fathers said. 660
Made all the homilies he read his own,
And felt a wish to make them better known ;
Thought all the articles were *strictly true*,
Lamenting they were thought so, by *so few*.*
But chiefly drew from scripture channels pure,
His clearest knowledge, his best furniture.
Hence he had always some good things to say,
To teach his hearers twice on sabbath-day.
Nor did his labours with the sabbath end,
For he would cheer the sick, the dying tend ! 670.
With mild rebukes the vicious seek to gain,
Or sooth with gentle words the suff'rer's pain.
His wife, fit partner for a grave divine,
Was fam'd for nostrums and good currant-wine :

* Some of the clergy contend that the articles are not Calvinistic, or that they are mere articles of peace and matters of form, which each may subscribe in what sense he pleases.

The Nonconformist.

She furnish'd salves, and physic for the poor,
Which were not costly, if they did not cure ;
Would caudles rich for groaning mothers brew,
And teach their daughters how to knit and sew.

Him, they would friend and father, justly call,
For he was friend and father to them all. 680

Their ancient sires, he piously had laid
Beneath the church-yard yew-trees' solemn shade ;
Their sons and daughters he in wedlock tied,
And bless'd each youthful bridegroom and his bride.
Their children nam'd at the baptismal pool,
And gave them learning at the parish school.

With equal usefulness and honest aim,
See yonder pastor of degraded name ;
'The Nonconformist, who, for conscience' sake,
From relics of old Rome presumes to break ; 690
Whose useful talents love and duty bind,
To serve a people of a willing mind ;
A people, who, with fruitful love rejoice,
The faithful pastor of their gen'ral choice.

Tho' diff'rent modes may diff'rent tempers suit,
These are distinctions little worth dispute :
None but a bigot will a brother blame,—
True christians are in principle the same.
The independant church, or baptist view,
They are alike—draw but the picture true : 700

The true Christian.

Alike the faith and worship they profess,
Alike their pastors, and their usefulness.

These, are by no mean worldly motives sway'd,
For they, tho' lab'ring much, are poorly paid.
Not by ambition are they led to search,
For lordly titles from a christian church.
These seek not ease, or Pleasure's licens'd scope—
'They have no downy Rectories to hope.
'Tho' Scorn derides, and Poverty assails,
The love of God, of Truth, and souls prevails! 710

Behold the Christian, he demands respect,
Whatever be his name, his mode, his sect;
He loves the God who made him—thinks with awe
On his perfections vast, and perfect law;
Yet with a filial confidence relies
On this great Parent, holy, good, and wise.

He loves the Saviour, who on Calv'ry bled,
A spotless victim in the sinner's stead;
Hails him the gift, and means of endless Love,
His Plea below, his Advocate above. 720

He loves the Spirit, whose renewing grace,
Illumes and sanctifies a fallen race;
Supports and cheers the saint while trav'ling home,
And gives sweet foretastes of the joys to come.

He loves his Bible, fount of Truth divine,
Whence comfort beams, and light and glories shine :

The true Christian.

Its doctrines credits, by its precepts lives,
And its sure promises by faith receives.

He loves the world, and o'er its follies weeps,
But his own heart with jealous caution keeps: 730
In manners gentle, gen'rous, good, and kind;
Religion forms his actions, and his mind.

Hence flow soft Charity, and Pity bland,
That move a feeling heart, and helping hand;
He pardons freely, should a brother fail,
Well knowing that himself is weak and frail.

He builds no hope on merits of his own,
But trusts to *Mercy*, boasts of *Grace* alone:
Eternal things his better thoughts engage;
Nor will he TRIFLE IN A TRIFLING AGE.

THE END.



THE
RAISING OF JAÏRUS' DAUGHTER;
A POEM.

BY
FRANCIS WRANGHAM, M. A.

Sed revocare gradum—

(VIRG. *Æn.* vi. 128.)

TO WHICH IS ANNEXED
A SHORT MEMOIR,
INTERSPERSED WITH
A FEW POETICAL PRODUCTIONS,
OF THE LATE
CAROLINE SYMMONS.

*I vidi in terra angelici cosumi,
E celesti bellezze al mondo sole,
Tal che di rimembrar mi gioca e duole.*

(PETR. I. cxxiii.)

LONDON :

Printed for J. MAWMAN, Poultry;

DEIGHTON, Cambridge;

and TODD, WOLSTENHOLME, and WILSON & SPENCE, York;

By R. TAYLOR, Black-Horse-Court, Fleet-Street.

1804.

TO

WALTER FAWKES, ESQ.

FARNLEY-HALL, YORKSHIRE.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

“THE Raising of JAIRUS’ Daughter,” the SEATON-subject for 1803, was a summons which, though as a Master of Arts I had declined former invitations from the same quarter, as a Father I could not resist. I sat down, and wrote the following poem. That it was shut out by circumstances (whether properly or not, remains for others to determine) from a competition, in which it might

probably have been worsted, ought perhaps to furnish matter of rejoicing both to you and to myself—to you, as the simple fact of its exclusion cannot possibly reflect any discredit upon its patron: to me, as it would have given me pain to couple a name like yours with a defeated work; though I had previously resolved that this attempt, such as it is, should at all events be published; and, as a slender testimony of my affectionate regard, dedicated to you.

It is usual, I believe, upon these occasions to find or to create some analogy, real or supposed, between the subject of the composition and the character of its protectour; and the principle, though undoubtedly liable to abuse, is within certain limits highly proper: nor would it demand the diaphragm of a DEMOCRITUS, to laugh at a Treatise on Dancing

inscribed to a Lord Chief Justice, an Essay on Field-Sports to a Bishop, or a Harmony of the Gospels to a Secretary at War.

But where, as in the present instance, the theme is supernatural, the difficulty of detecting or of devising such a parallel is considerably augmented. For the sake of the omen (to borrow a hint from classic superstition) I will not institute a comparison between your paternal feelings, and those of JAIRUS; and to refer to your almost-miraculous eloquence, as having lately roused from it's death-like torpours the loyalty of a mighty county, would be at least quaint, and perhaps in the estimation of the scrupulous critic profane. I must therefore be content to confine the analogy to one of the illustrations of my poem, in which I slightly mention the "existing circumstances" of a country so

justly dear to us both. And here, if I might be permitted to exspatiate, I should easily discover ample grounds of allusion: for, whether I celebrate the patriot or the agriculturist, the ‘honest toil’ of the farmer or the lifted ‘arm of the volunteer,’ I know no one whose image is more closely associated with those truly-*British* ideas than your own.

I remain

My dear Friend,

Most faithfully yours,

FRANCIS WRANGHAM.

HUNMANBY,
November 1803.

ADVERTISEMENT.

WITH a view to the competition for the SEATON-prize, the following poem was delivered to Dr. SUMNER, the Vice-Chancellor of *Cambridge*, on the 27th of the last *September*; but was soon afterwards returned with an intimation that, ‘according to a printed notice (distributed in the College-Halls, &c.) no composition could be admitted, which was sent in subsequently to the 10th of *July*.’ It may, perhaps, be a little vexatious to me to reflect, that this unfortunate work had been completed ever since the end of *June*; and retained in my hands for the three ensuing months, solely with a view of introducing into it any slight verbal alteration, which might casually occur before the 29th of *September*—the day hitherto, I believe, uniformly (but, certainly, for a very long term of years uninterruptedly) prescribed as the limit for the reception of SEATON-exercises. Of the new regulation I was entirely, and from my remote situation almost necessarily, ignorant. It was not published in the county-newspapers, which always announce the appointment of the subject: and, if I had even entertained a suspicion about it, I could hardly have made it a topic of inquiry without an infringement of that secrecy which is virtually enjoined by the public notices, and usually, I should imagine, enforced by the private feelings of the candidate himself.

This was represented on my behalf to the Vice-Chancellor (and, through him, to the Master of *Clare-Hall*)

by a gentleman, whose very eminent station in the University is yet scarcely level with that, which he occupies in the ranks of poetical talent and refined taste. His suggestions, however, though their failure would seem to involve something like a partiality to the resident Masters of Arts, who alone can learn with certainty and with privacy the fluctuating terms of competition, were of no effect.

The interval between the announcing of the subject in the beginning of *April*, and the assignment of the prize at the end of *October*, it has been customary to subdivide into six months for composition, and one for decision. That proportion is, in the present instance at least, varied; and, while three months only were indulged to the writer, four have been reserved for the judge. Does this new arrangement exhibit more correctly the ratio between the difficulty of composing, and of comparing? Or are the relative toils of criticism and of authorship better expressed by the old sentence,

Natura omnes fecit judices, paucos artifices?

For the few pages appended to the poem I might rather perhaps claim the gratitude, than solicit the indulgence of the reader. The workmanship is, indeed, very unworthy of the materials; but the diamond is necessarily enchased in a setting of inferiour value: and I may apostrophize the subject of them in the lines, addressed by BUCHANAN to his royal patroness:

—*quod ab ingenio domini sperare nequibant,
Debeant genio forsitan illa tuo.*

F. W.

THE
RAISING
OF
JAÏRUS' DAUGHTER.

Sed revocare gradum——

VIRG. *Æn.* vi. 128.

THE
RAISING
OF
JAÏRUS' DAUGHTER.

DEATH's iron slumbers chased, th' expectant tomb
'Reft of its prey, and o'er the clay-cold cheek
Life's refluent lustre shooting, theme for less
Than seraph's harp too high, with trembling hand
The bard essays. *Aonian* mockeries, hence !
Back to your *Pindus*, nor let foot profane
Vex the chaste ground. 'Twas yours of yore to sing,
How with his lyre's soft magic ORPHEUS thrill'd
The ear of DIS ; and from his doleful realm,
But that nor love nor pity dwelt in hell,
Had borne EURYDICE : the strain of truth

Claims loftier inspiration. O be thou,
Blest Faith (as 'tis thy wont, 'mid scenes of fate,
With heaven's own strength to nerve the sinking soul)
The Christian poet's muse ; on wing of flame
Buoy his faint flight, and guide him through the gloom.

For lo ! where tossing on her restless couch
Meagre and flush'd, the food of hectic fires,
Gasps in weak conflict with the mortal fiend
Capernaüm's lovely daughter ; gasps in vain,
Beneath his withering grasp. Nor art can lure,
Nor might can shake him from his destined spoil.
Vainly to him sweet Innocence her palms
Spreads suppliant, and entreats with many a tear
Short respite from her death-pangs : Youth in vain
Pleads his brief hopes, or ere they bloom, decay'd ;
In sudden midnight quench'd his morning sun,
His glittering day-dreams fled : The sigh of Love,
Breathed from the inmost soul ; pure Friendship's prayer,

Which fain with life would buy the life she craves ;
Affection's tender prompt solicitude,
Keen to explore and eager to relieve
The want, just hinted by the asking glance—
All fruitless to arrest the ebbing blood,
Or check the pulse with mad precipitance
Fast hurrying to its goal ! But who shall tell
The woe JAIKUS feels, as fix'd he marks
In her (so late his bosom's foremost pride)
The quivering livid lip, its long farewell
Faint whispering ; turn'd to him the dying look,
Him anxious seeking with its latest beam,
And fondly lingering on the much-loved face !
Ah ! whither shall he bend his soul's sad view ?
Where find repose ? The future, once so bright,
When Hope and Fancy sketch'd the happy groups
Dear to a grandsire's breast, appals him now
With horror's direst forms—the shrouded corse,
The bier, the black procession. Scared he shrinks,

And back through many a well-remember'd year
Darts his quick eye : but O yet deeper pangs
Lie ambush'd there ! Too faithful to the past,
Officious memory throngs the living scene
With all the father's joys—the fond caress,
The heart-sprung smile, the glance intelligent,
The speaking gesture, and the courted knee,
Throne of the babe's delight ! In dumb despair,
Dumbness to which all eloquence is mute,
He hides his countenance. At *Aulis* thus,
When 'mid assembled *Greece* his knife of death
Stern CALCHAS brandish'd o'er the victim-maid,
Forth from the circling host in various guise
Burst the wild passions, by immortal art
Stamp'd on the glowing canvas ¹. Furious here

1 The pretended marriage with ACHILLES, which ULYSSES suggested as a lure to draw IPHIGENIA to *Aulis*, with the substitution of a stag for the royal victim, and the daring originality with which TIMANTHES represented the agonies of AGAMEMNON, in his picture of the sacrifice, are too well known to need any detail.

The frantic mother raved ; there prostrate sued
 The weeping friend ; ACHILLES half unsheath'd
 His mighty blade ², and TELAMON's brave son
 Then first knew terrour. Even ULYSSES felt
 Thrill through his icy heart the sudden throe,
 And wish'd uncounsell'd now his prosperous wile.
 Apart in majesty of grief, with face
 (Beyond the painter's happiest mimicry)
 Wrapt in his lifted robe, ATRIDES stood
 Sadly pre-eminent ; and art was hail'd
 Even in defeat triumphant. But avaunt
 Tales of the *Tauric* huntress, and the hind
 Vicarious, and the rescued nymph ; though told
 In strains of deathless glory. Holier song
 Befits the Christian bard, whose golden lyre
 Should own no string, that sounds to aught but heaven.

†—

² "Ελκετο δ' ἐκ κολεοῦ μέγα ξίφος.—

HOM. II. α. 194.

Borne on that sigh, her gentle spirit rose
Buoyant through yon blue concave ; and shook off
(Half angel, ere it fled) its beauteous clay ³ :
To its bright home by sister-seraphs led,
And by glad myriads of the sainted just
Greeted with hymns of triumph. So the lark,
Late in some sunless cottage-nook confined,
The toy of froward youth, if chance throw wide
It's prison-doors and bid the captive range
Free as it's kindred choir, with strange delight
Hears and obeys ; and, soaring to the skies,
Floats on light plume amid the liquid noon ⁴.

O ye, around whose knee a daughter's arms
(As, tottering on, she hail'd your wish'd return)

³ Amidst the trifling discordancy of the Evangelists, which occurs in this place, it may be proper to state that I have followed St. MATTHEW. See also the annexed Memoir *.

⁴ “ *Nare per æstatem liquidam* ”——

VIRG. Georg. iv. 59.

Have fondly fasten'd ; whose transported ear
Has drunk the prattler's accents, as she lisp'd
Your welcome back with many a proffer'd kiss,
And smiles which art would emulate in vain—
Weep for the lost JAIRUS. Ye have known
What 'twas, amid the million cares and woes
(Man's hapless lot below) to find at home
That magic circle, o'er whose charmed round,
Save by the guidance of the wizard fates,
Nor cares nor woes intrude. O pause and think,
Even in your noontide blaze of rapture think,
If GOD his fostering beam should turn aside,
What darkness may be yours ! and, while ye kneel
In grateful fervour to protecting heaven,
In generous sadness for JAIRUS weep.

No ; o'er his agonies rejoice : rejoice,
That sharpest suffering led his anxious step
To life's pure source, and bade him from that fount

Exhaustless drink and live. With show of hate
Thus oft kind Mercy, mask'd in anger's guise,
Smites whom she loves. The mad tornado oft
Sweeps on rough wing across a smiling land ;
And what was *Eden*, ere the spoiler came,
Lies a waste wilderness : but thence the breeze,
Which stagnant erst in sultry stillness slept,
Is quicken'd into health, and genial gales
Play round the languid temple. Borne from far,
Where *Nubia* melts beneath the burning day,
Oft the broad torrent with resistless flood
Whelms infant Spring ; and trembling *Egypt* views
O'er his soft bloom the wide-spread deluge close :
Yet thence emerging soon the rosy boy,
With lusty sinew by the billow strung,
Quaffs the rich tide and thrives at every pore.

Haste then to CHRIST, and prostrate at his feet,
With hope's bright ardour glowing in thine heart,

Implore his sovereign aid. To that blest ear
The good man's sorrows never rise in vain.
O tell him that thy child, thy manhood's joy,
Th' expected grace and guardian of thine age,
In Death's chill gripe has wither'd, like a flower
Scathed by the summer-storm.—But no ; forbear !
He knows thy woes : thy bosom's inmost pulse
Throbs to his eye. And lo, with eager haste
Zealous through thronging crowds he presses on,
At thine and pity's summons ! Stay him not,
Ye curious, ye diseased : And thou, whose blood
Twelve tedious springs th' insatiate plague ^s has drain'd,
Catch not his robe ; though thou art wretched too,
Revere a parent's anguish. Wondrous man !
Even from his hem, by faith's pure finger touch'd,
The healing virtue flows, nor aught delays
His onward foot. And now the deafening din
Of minstrel mourners marks the drear abode,

Where fast the maiden slumbers ; undisturb'd
By wailing friends, the deep funereal dirge,
And all the pomp of grief. And now her hand
The SAVIOUR takes ; now from th' almighty lip
Issues the irresistible decree,
“ Damsel, arise.” Her mortal sleep dispell'd,
And life's new vigour tingling through her veins,
Instant she wakes, as from a raptured dream
Chased by the morn's soft whisper ; and beholds,
With all the daughter rushing to her eyes,
Her father by her side. O what was then
His gush of joy, as to his bounding heart
He caught, he clasp'd her close ! Not more the bliss
The patriot hero feels, whose lifted arm
Guards his loved Prince, while round his country's coasts
Invasion's hovering harpies scream for prey :
Not more his bliss when, sheath'd the hallow'd steel
(It's work of glory done, and in the dust
Th' insulting foe laid low) with honest toil,

'Mid the dear pledges of domestic love,
He tills the fields his unbought valour saved.

And so when, sign of universal doom,
'Midst heaven's circumference yon golden orb
Shall veil his flaming forehead ; and the moon,
Portentous phase ! on æther's azure vest
Glare a red blood-spot : while in fearful course
Athwart or backward, whirling through the void,
The lawless planets rush ; and earth, convulsed,
Deep to her centre shakes—on Death's dull ear
Again the thrilling voice shall burst ; again
From his gaunt grasp the shrouded victim rend,
And pour through all his caves empyreal day.
No single corse, as when with joy's wild throb
Close to his heaving breast JAIROS strain'd
His rescued child ; but swarms, to equal whom
Night's spangled host or *Libya's* world of sand
Were faint comparison, to sudden life

Shall start amazed. With keen compunction some,
Self-sentenced ere they meet their righteous Judge,
Shall to the crashing rocks and mountains cry
To screen them from his presence. Fruitless prayer !
Nor rocks nor whelming mountains can subdue
The conscious bosom's anguish : deep within
Coil'd round their life-strings lies th' immortal worm,
And gnaws with sharp remorse the quivering heart.
Others (and O may he, whose feeble hand
Frames this weak verse, the chosen number swell !)
Their mortal clay resign'd, in heavenly forms
Shall rise, resplendent as the summer sun
Even in his mid-day lustre ; and with bliss,
O'erpaying years of bitterest agony,
Hear the glad accents : “ Faithful servants, come ;
“ Receive your promised meed. Your toils were great,
“ And great is their reward. The God ye served,
“ Steadfast when passion sapp'd and scorn assail'd,
“ He, He is yours : for you is twined the wreath

“ Of *Eden's* greenest amaranth, and for you
“ Flung wide th' eternal portals. Enter in,
“ Your task complete, your race of duty run,
“ And share the joys and glories of your LORD.”



APPENDIX.

* WOULD that these lines had been suggested solely by my imagination; and that the portrait of dying excellence which they exhibit had not been, in purpose at least, too faithful a copy from nature! I might then have been spared my present melancholy office. But—whatever pain I may suffer, or perhaps for a moment inflict, by the recital—I owe it to the obligation of an invaluable friendship; to the memory of a most uncommonly-gifted young Lady, in whom charms and talents and virtues strove for mastery; and (if I may subjoin so worthless a motive) to the interests of the preceding poem, whose heroine however is but a feeble representative of the ‘all-lovely’ archetype I had in view; to seize this opportunity of introducing

A
SHORT MEMOIR,
INTERSPERSED WITH
A FEW POETICAL PRODUCTIONS,
OF THE LATE
CAROLINE SYMMONS ¹.

BORN on the twelfth of *April* (1789), a day before illustrious in the *English* calendar, as the anniversary of one of our most eminent naval victories, from her infancy she discovered indications of very extraordinary powers of intellect. Of these, as they existed in her seventh year, I had first an opportunity of forming an estimate : alas ! that, ere a second seven were well numbered, she should be no more !

¹ Daughter of the Rev. CHARLES SYMMONS, D. D. and ELIZABETH his wife, sister of Captain FOLEY of the Navy, who so highly distinguished himself during the last war in the battle of the *Nile*, and in that before *Copenhagen* ; and of the late R. FOLEY, Esq. of *Gray's Inn*, one of the Magistrates of the Police ; of whom an interesting memoir is given in the *Monthly Magazine* for *October* 1803, vol. xvi. p. 374.

*Le cresse chiome d'or puro lucente,
 E 'l lampeggiar del' angelico riso,
 Che solean far in terra un paradiso,
 Poca polvere son, che nulla sente.*

(PETR. II. xxiv.)

At a period of life, in which grace and beauty are seldom so much disclosed as to interest any eyes, except those of the relative or of the friend, she was strikingly endowed with both; and, if I had the pencil of a REYNOLDS or a HOPPNER, I would endeavour to do justice to her personal charms. But these, “at their best state, are altogether vanity.” *Ut vultus hominum, ita simulacra vultûs imbecilla ac mortalia sunt; forma mentis æterna.* (TAC. Agric. 46.) From a subject therefore, to which I feel myself unequal, I turn to the display of her mind: a labour indeed still more hopeless, if I did not (fortunately for myself, and for the world) possess specimens of it's energies, which will in a great measure supersede the necessity of my poor description.

ZELIDA, the first of her poems with which I was favoured by her father soon after it's composition, is dated Nov. 24, 1800; and, as the production of a child (if she could ever properly have been pronounced a child) of eleven years of age, is surely most wonderful.

ZELIDA;

AND THE FADED ROSE-BUSH, WHICH GREW NEAR HER TOMB.

I gazed on the rose-bush, I heaved a sad sigh,
And mine eyelid was gemm'd with a tear:
Oh! let me, I cried, by my ZELIDA lie;
For all that I value sleeps here.

Her sweetness, simplicity, virtue, and charms
Could with nought but a seraph's compare:
Ah! now, since my ZELIDA's torn from my arms,
There is nothing I love but despair.

This rose-tree once flourish'd, and sweeten'd the air;
Like it's blossom, all-lovely she grew:
The scent of her breath, as it's fragrance, was rare;
And her cheeks were more fresh than it's hue.

She planted, she loved it, she dew'd it's gay head;
And it's bloom every rival defied.
But, alas! what was beauty or virtue soon fled:
—In spring they both blossom'd, and died.

And now for my bosom this life has no charms;
I feel all it's troubles, and care:
For, since my dear ZELIDA's rent from my arms,
There is nothing I love but despair.

What may perhaps excite at least equal surprise with the beauty of the stanzas themselves, is the selection of the subject—'A faded rose-bush!' What a theme, to be chosen by a youthful poetess, in the full tide of health and animation! How sweetly characteristic of her own

blossoming, the third verse ! The fourth, how mournfully ominous of her decay ! “ It is indeed ” (said a lady, whom to name would be to establish the justness of the criticism, if it’s merits were more doubtful) “ *little less than miraculous* ; and so completely unlike any other compositions I have ever known, that, delightful as I think it, I should feel almost terrified at such premature excellence—excellence of every kind ; for one knows not which most to admire, the genius which inspires, or the taste which executes ! ” Prophetic forebodings ! too soon, too fully to be realized !

I must not however tear myself from this exquisite little piece without adding, on her father’s authority, that like all her other works “ it was in the strictest sense her own, having received no improvements or heightenings from the suggestions of any person whatever : ” a declaration, in which I place the most implicit confidence, from my knowledge of both the parties concerned, neither of whom could have done so much violence to their nature, as to descend for an instant to any thing like imposition or deceit.

A Sonnet, addressed to her elder sister, of a still priour date (*Oct. 21, 1800*) I had overlooked ; but it shall not be omitted.

TO FANNIA.

FANNIA, behold where yonder harmless bee
Wantonly sports around that woodbine bower
She sips the nectar'd sweets of every flower,
And spends her happy time in mirthful glee.

Yet some, my girl—ah, how unlike to thee!
Would on this insect wreak their brutal power;
Would now, even now, disturb that industry,
Which gilds her every short but blissful hour.

But thou hast never shown that cruel will.
Let those, who are in glittering coaches roll'd,
The helpless insect of a morning kill,
While nought they prize but luxury and gold:
Thou wilt not such a barbarous task fulfil—
For thy young heart, my love, was formed of softer mould.

A story in the heroic measure, entitled *LAURA*, perfectly well connected and arranged through an extent of more than five hundred harmonious lines, was likewise about this time produced; when, it must be remembered, she was yet short of the age of *JAIRUS' Daughter* (*Mark* v. 42.): but through some unfortunate neglect it is now, I fear, in great part at least, irrecoverably lost.

The three following Sonnets, dated respectively *Nov.* 27, 28, and 29, 1800, were sent to me in *January* 1801.

ON A BLIGHTED ROSE-BUD.

Scarce had thy velvet lips imbibed the dew,
And nature hail'd thee infant queen of *May* ;
Scarce saw thine opening bloom the sun's broad ray,
And to the air thy tender fragrance threw :
When the north-wind enamour'd of thee grew,
And by his cold rude kiss thy charms decay.
Now droops thine head, now fades thy blushing hue ;
No more the queen of flowers, no longer gay.
So blooms a maid, her guardian's health and joy,
Her mind array'd in innocency's vest ;
When suddenly, impatient to destroy,
Death clasps the virgin to his iron breast.
She fades—The parent, sister, friend deplore
The charms and budding virtues now no more 2.

WRITTEN IN WINTER.

Aërial FLORA, sister of the spring,
Arise, and let thy blooming form be seen :
Haste! play thy youthful fancies on the green,
And from thy hand ambrosial odours fling.
Invite the sylvan choir to wake and sing,
While the sun sleeps in gold upon the scene :
To dress the grove thy clustering hare-bell bring,
And chase hoar winter with thy sprightly mien.
Then shall sweet zephyrs and prolific showers
Succeed to parching winds, and beating rain ;
With their soft balm re-animate the flowers,
And strew gay cowslips o'er the golden plain.
Then frost no more shall waste the roseate bowers ;
But FLORA, crown'd with sweets, her sway unhurt maintain.

2 These beautiful lines are to be inscribed upon her tomb.

ON SPRING.

'Throned on soft clouds, his locks with hawthorn bound
Twined with young rose-buds, jocund Spring appears :
The little violet by his smile he cheers,
And teaches primroses to bloom around.

To his pleased ear the birds their carols sound,
And near his feet it's head the sweet-brier rears :
Nature exults to see her darling crown'd,
And all the living scene his power reveres.

The hill and valley with bright verdure spread,
The infant CERES in her verdant gown,
The various plants which open in the mead,
And fanning gales his genial presence own :
But soon the rage of summer shall succeed ;
And scorch the sweets, which breathe in Spring's soft lap alone.

From the prevalence of wintry dates in the present little collection (for they all occur in the interval between *October* and *April*) the flowers of which it is composed seem, like those described by COWPER in his *Task* as "following the nimble finger of the fair," to have blown

"With most success, when all besides decay."

The vein indeed of this infantine muse, like that of her own MILTON (as represented by PHILIPS) appears to have "flowed most happily from the autumnal equinox to the vernal." The following very pathetic verses

were the growth of the same luxuriant *November*, of 1800,

THE FLOWER-GIRL'S CRY.

Come buy my wood hare-bells, my cowslips come buy !

O take my carnations, and jessamines sweet :

Lest their beauties should wither, their perfumes should die,

All snatch'd like myself from their native retreat.

O ye, who in pleasure and luxury live,

Whose bosoms would sink beneath half my sad woes ;

Ah ! deign to my cry a kind answer to give,

And shed a soft tear for the fate of poor ROSE.

Yet once were my days happy, sweet, and serene ;

And once have I tasted the balm of repose :

But now on my cheek meagre famine is seen,

And anguish prevails in the bosom of ROSE.

Then buy my wood hare-bells, my cowslips come buy !

O take my carnations, and jessamines sweet :


Lest their beauties should wither, their perfumes should die,

All snatch'd like myself from their native retreat.

With regard to the whole of the above compositions, if it be suggested that the writer was still not within sight of her teens, it is not in the slightest degree intended as an apology (for what is there in them to demand apology ?) but merely to keep in the reader's mind, what their singularly-elegant execution would otherwise inevitably cause him to forget. He will be astonished to discover

in them at once accuracy of mechanical structure, flowing numbers, and splendid expression ; and he will not fail to observe, that she has gathered many a ‘ young rose-bud’ and ‘ wood hare-bell,’ which had been overlooked by her taller predecessors in the same track.

The passionate attachment, which she at this period felt to the best *English* poets, amongst whom SPENSER and young MILTON (as I have before hinted) were her prime favourites, ought here to be mentioned. So much indeed she was struck with the charms of *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, that to have been the author of them, she declared ‘ there was no personal sacrifice of face or form, which she would have declined :’ and few have had so much of either to offer. Nay, afterwards—on her returning home one morning from WARE the oculist's, where she had been undergoing an operation ; when her sufferings became a subject of conversation, and a tender concern was expressed for the possible danger to which the sight of the afflicted organ was exposed, she said with a smile that, ‘ to be a MILTON, she would cheerfully consent to lose both her eyes.’



From this feeble attempt to show her, like her own rose-tree, “ flourishing and sweetening the air,” I am

now reluctantly summoned to represent her, like it, fading away : to represent

*Gli occhi sereni, e le stellanti ciglia,
La bella bocca angelica, di perle
Piena e di rose e di dolce parole &c.*

(PETR. l. clxvii.)

gradually losing their hue and their lustre, though not their sweetness.

For now the delicacy of her health, a circumstance proverbially alas ! connected with prematurity of mental power, began to excite serious alarm in the breasts of her parents. Of this a letter from her father, dated *March 19, 1801*, first conveyed to me the mournful intelligence ; and, along with it, a promise (of which I did not, I fear, sufficiently stimulate the fulfilment) that the whole of her productions, with their respective dates, should at some time or other be transcribed for me, as an interesting specimen of childish ability. Those, that have reached me, I hasten to impart to the reader.

The earliest of them is an Invocation to Memory ; a poem full of expressions which, little noticed perhaps by her friends on it's first appearance (*Feb. 18, 1801*), must

since have recurred with excruciating emphasis to their feelings.

TO MEMORY.

Hail, Memory! celestial maid,
Who lovest with solitude to dwell
Under the mountain's ragged shade,
Retired within thy pensive cell:

O thou, my mingled joy and woe,
Sweet source of every bursting sigh!
Who bidd'st these silent sorrows flow;
Hail, heaven-born soothing Memory!

The sky is clad in tenderest blue,
And Zephyr spreads his balmy wing:
The bending floweret weeps with dew;
The bird's soft song salutes the spring.

Yet, far retired from this gay scene,
From solitude and thee I seek
My friend's soft sigh, her smile serene,
Her speaking eye, her moisten'd cheek.

Come then, and sooth my labouring heart!
Come, awful power! come, sweetest maid!
O haste, my LUCIA's smile impart,
And leave the mountain's ragged shade.

What, more consistent with his present agony of affliction, could have been produced, even by the very elegant and nervous pen of her father himself?

The Address to Content, which from her peculiar diffidence she would not permit to be called an Ode, is dated

Feb. 22.; *May-day*, and *The Snow-drop*, *March* 10.; *The Hare-bell*, *March* 16.; *The Song*, *April* 30.; *The Invocation to Sleep*, *Oct.* 20.; and the *Sonnet to Mrs. CORNWALL*, *Nov.* 4, 1801. Of these the *Snow-drop*, the *Song*, and the *Invocation to Sleep* were intended for insertion in a romance ("The Orphan of the Cottage") which she and her elder sister had begun in partnership; but which has since, with a feeling easily conceivable, been thrown into the fire by the lovely survivor.

ADDRESS TO CONTENT.

Sweet child of virtue, calm Content!
 Friend of the lowly, hear my cry;
 Who turn'st the dart by sorrow sent,
 And smooth'st the rugged brow of poverty.

Gay morn awakes her wanton gale,
 To kiss the sweets of every mead:
 Soft dews impearl the verdant vale,
 And gently bend the cowslip's silken head.

Yet without thee vain blooms the scene,
 In vain the sylvan warbler sings;
 In vain the dale is clad in green,
 In vain the spicy shrub soft odour flings.

Come then, sweet maid! bid trouble cease,
 And here thy heavenly sisters bring,
 Light Cheerfulness and white-robed Peace:—
 Teach woe to smile, and bending toil to sing.

She hears! she comes! she cheers my breast,
And adds fresh lustre to the view:
How richly now the tulip's drest!
How sweet the little violet's milder hue!

Yes! place me where the cold wind blows;
With her the storm I will not dread:
O'er all a sunny robe she throws,
And twines the wreath of spring for winter's head.

ON MAY-DAY.

Now, breaking from her long repose,
Light MAY with rosy footstep walks the mead;
While white-eyed hawthorn blossoms on her head,
And king-cups round her feet unclose.
And see where, in yon flowering grove,
The shepherd twines a garland for his love;
And beneath the lime's sweet arms
Tells of innocence's charms:
While all around them MAY's soft influence prove,
And gay delight each bosom warms.

'The lawn's green lap with flowerets strown,
'The genial showers which animate the vale,
'The odours scatter'd on each balmy gale,
And heaven's warm blue her influence own.
Sweetest virgin! flower-crown'd MAY!
For whom the shepherd tunes his simple lay:
Dresser of the purple year!
Ever shed thy blessings here;
And long, beneath thy sceptre's gentle sway,
May these laughing plains appear!

THE SNOW-DROP.

When iron winter's desolating gale
 Wastes the green beauties of the vale,
 The Snow-drop rears her pensile head,
 And meekly blossoms in the naked mead:
 While no young verdure springs beneath her feet,
 And fierce and beating rains low bend the tender sweet.

Torn from her playful infancy's loved haunt,
 And thrown to pride's unfeeling taunt,
 To inward eating care a prey,
 Thus the sad orphan treads life's desert way:
 While no soft accents breathe her woes to cheer,
 No pitying eye distils the sweetly-soothing tear.

THE HARE-BELL.

In spring's green lap there blooms a flower,
 Whose cups imbibe each vernal shower;
 Who sips fresh nature's balmy dew,
 Clad in her sweetest purest blue:
 Yet shuns the ruddy beam of morning,
 The shaggy wood's brown shades adorning.
 Simple floweret! child of *May*!
 Though hid from the broad eye of day;
 Though doom'd to waste those pensive graces
 In the wild wood's dark embraces;
 In desert air thy sweets to shed,
 Unnoticed droop the languid head;—
 Still nature's darling thou'lt remain:
 She feeds thee with her softest rain;
 Fills each sweet bell with honied tears,
 With genial gales thy blossom cheers.

Still then unfold thy bashful charms,
 In yon deep thicket's circling arms:
 Far from the common eye's coarse glare,
 No heedless hand shall harm thee there.
 Still then avoid the gaudy scene,
 The flaunting sun, th' embroider'd green;
 And bloom and fade, with chaste reserve, unseen. }

SONG.

O bear me to *Sicilia's* plains,
 Where golden-handed Plenty reigns;
 And pure-eyed Faith is wont to rove
 Through the verdant vales, with love.
 Bear me to her myrtle bowers,
 Thickly twined with breathing flowers;
 And lull me, as the wild-bee sings,
 There by her sleep-enticing springs.
 While the lark, with varied voices,
 To see the purple year rejoices;
 And the citron, glowing fair,
 Perfumes the fanning wing of air:
 Flowers in more mingled colours drest,
 Than paint the tulip's purpled vest;
 And shrubs on nature's bounty feeding,
 Liquid balsams sweetly bleeding,
 Shedding ambrosial sweets around,
 Mantle the green breast of the ground.
 Let me then raise my love-tuned song,
Sicily's sweet plains among:
 There my rosy hours employ,
 And wing slow time with airy joy.

TO SLEEP.

Come, Sleep ! sweet binder of the woes of pain !
 Thou, who check'st affliction's dart,
 Luller of the woe-toss'd heart,
 Death's pleasing image, come ! and show me CHARLES again.
 Say, hast thou wooed him in some cave to lie,
 Where Summer hangs her fairest wreath,
 And loads with rose-flung sweets the morning's breath ;
 With dewy influence there to close the eye,
 To lap stoln sense in transient death,
 And bid him dying live and living sweetly die ?

Or can'st thou tell me, what flower-broider'd way
 His footsteps kiss ; or where his eye,
 Held by rapture's flowery tie
 And drinking golden bliss, lingers with fond delay ?
 Haste thee then, nymph, in deepest darkness bright !
 Sweet delusion with thee bring,
 And with soft hand thy balmy blessings fling.
 Haste thee ! and cause thy form to shine through night :
 Life with sweet delusion wing ;
 Gild night with day's rich blaze, and death with life's delight !

TO MRS. CORNWALL,

Of Chart Park, near Dorking, Surry.

CORNWALL ! accept a stranger's grateful lay ;
 Who fain would thank thee for the warm delight
 Felt in these grounds that, gay with life, invite
 The poet's strain, and woo the foot to stray :

Where changeful nature vaunts her fair display,
 And spring and summer paints with pencil bright ;
 Till, as calm autumn mellows on the sight,
 She sinks in golden age and rich decay.

Here charms her various leaf, her waving line,
 With green health glowing and refined by art :
 Yet brighter beauties in thy bosom shine—
 Beauties to last, when those shall all depart :
 And far more sweet the charms, which there combine ;
 For those but please the eye, while these enchain the heart.

In the concluding couplet of this last beautiful production, she had the candour to reject an alteration of one line proffered by her father ³, on the plea of having the whole fourteen her own ; modestly remarking at the same time, that ‘ some faults would stamp the composition as more legitimately hers.’

There remains only now to be added her Sonnet to Lady LUCY FOLEY, on her birth-day (*Feb. 14.*), *illa tamquam cycnea divinæ puellæ vox*, written in *February 1803*.

No morn now blushes on th’ enamour’d sight,
 No genial sun now warms the torpid lay :
 Since *February* sternly check’d his ray,
 When Lucy’s eyes first beam’d their azure light.

³ Sweet nature’s face ! but worth’s strong charm is thine ;
 And that but strikes the eye, while this enchains the heart.

What, though no vernal flowers my hand invite
To crop their fragrance for your natal day;
Lucy! for you the snow-drop and the bay
Shall blend th' unfading green and modest white.

Though on your natal day, with aspect bleak,
Stern winter frown in icy garments drest;
Still may the rosy summer robe your cheek,
And the green spring still bud within your breast:
'Till, the world fading on your closing eyes,
You find a golden autumn in the skies.

Alas! before the end of this month a cough, accompanied with fever, had reduced her to the lowest stage of weakness, without however in the slightest degree affecting either her spirits or her temper. By her father, who with his excellent and beloved wife hung over her sick-bed in the most palpitating state of anxiety, I was informed (in a letter, dated *April 17.*) that the nature of her complaint was but too clearly ascertained to be pulmonary; a conclusion in no respect weakened by the frequent alternations of better and worse, so fatally characteristic of consumption. Those who, like myself, have ever lost a dear friend by the mining of that treacherous assailant, will not need to be told what were now the reciprocations of hope and fear in the hearts of

her surrounding relatives, The low and languid morning, so often unexpectedly following a day of cheerfulness and a night of repose, the delusive glow of the cheek, the debility and emaciation, and above all the importunate and unrelenting cough ⁴—as exhibited to me in the last days of a father, to whose judicious tenderness and self-denying liberality, under God, I owe all my blessings—will never be erased from my memory :

“ O thou, my mingled joy and woe,
 “ Sweet source of every bursting sigh !
 “ Who bidd’st these silent sorrows flow ;
 “ Hail, heaven-born soothing Memory !”

Now might her doting trembling father have repeated

⁴ Who does not remember WEST’s affecting description of his own sufferings in the same complaint ?—of the

—————*importunissima tussis,*
Qua durare datur traxitque sub ilia vires :
Dura etenim versans imo sub pectore regna,
Perpetuo exercet teneras luctamine costas,
Oraque distorquet vocemque immutat anhelam.
Nec cessare locus ; sed sævo concita motu
Molle domat latus, et corpus labor omne fatigat :
Unde molesta dies, noctemque insomnia turbant.

over her, with well-deserved and prophetic panegyric,
the well-known *chef-d'œuvre* of PETRARCH :

*Chi vuol veder quantunque può natura
E 'l ciel tra noi, venga a mirar costei,
Che sola un sol ; non pur a gli occhi miei,
Ma al mondo cieco che virtù non cura.*

*E venga tosto ; perche morte fura
Prima i migliori, e lascia star i rei.
Questa, aspettata al regno degli Dei,
Cosa bella mortal passa e non dura.*

*Vedrà, s'arriva a tempo, ogni virtute,
Ogni bellezza, ogni real costume
Giunti in un corpo con mirabil tempre :
Allor dira che mie rime son mute,
L' ingegno offeso dal soverchio lume ;
Ma, se più tarda, avrà da pianger sempre 5.*

(l. ccx.)

For on the first of *June*, a day (like that of her birth)

5 Of this beautiful Sonnet I have attempted a translation, which
it perhaps requires some apology for subjoining to such a master-
piece of elegance and pathos, *giunti in un corpo*, even in a note.

Stranger ! whose curious glance delights to trace
What Heaven and Nature join'd to form most rare ;
Here view mine eye's bright sun : a sight so fair
That purblind worlds, like me, enamour'd gaze.

gloriously distinguished in our national annals ⁶, and for it's double interest ever to be lamented, ever to be honoured ! the terrible blow, which had been so long suspended, fell ; and “ her gentle spirit ” *returned unto God who gave it.*

Early, bright, transient, chaste as morning-dew,
She sparkled, was exhaled, and went to heaven.

(YOUNG. *Night V.*)

Another touch or two of the pencil, and I have done.

To her extraordinary charms, and talents, she united virtues almost as extraordinary ; particularly those of ex-

But speed thy step ; for Death with rapid pace
Pursues the best, nor deems the bad his care.
Call'd to the skies, through yon blue fields of air,
On buoyant plume the cherub-child obeys.

Then haste, and mark in one rich form combined
(And, while surpassing lustre pains thine eye,
Chide the weak efforts of my trembling lay)
Each charm of person, and each grace of mind.
But, if thy lingering foot my call deny,
Grief and repentant shame shall mourn the brief delay.

F. W.

⁶ By Earl Howe's victory in 1794, as the former in 1782 by that of Lord Rodney.

quisite but well-regulated sensibility, of active humanity, of diffidence which shrunk from applause, and of piety which like the cypress, ever verdant, seemed to flourish with augmented vigour upon the borders of the grave. These will be best illustrated by two or three little anecdotes ; which however, independently of their present application, deserve to be recorded, were it only as they display at a very early age an uncommon degree of reflexion and right feeling.

On his return from *France*, where he had resided for some time during the first period of the disastrous revolution in that country, one of her uncles presented to her, then quite a child, a national cockade. This she wore with apparent pleasure, until the king was put to death : but, upon that melancholy event, she instantly carried it to her father ; and declared, that “ she would never again bear the colours of a people, who had committed so cruel a deed 7.”

7 Alas! that in a refined age, and may I add a Christian country? any one should have been found, that one too a female (the reader of “ *The Correspondence of Louis XVI.*” will know, to whom I allude) *sic fera ac ferrea*, to speak with SALMASIUS, *atque al' omni sensu humanitatis aliena, vel à regię majestatis respectu aversa,*

In a more advanced stage of her short life her father, to show his high approbation of her poetry and of her ex-

ejus in pectore luctum privatum cum publico mœrore conjunctum non excitarent miserabilis tam sacri capitis et mirabilis cædes—facinus nunc inter probra sæculi, inter portenta olim numerandum ! (DEF. REG. præf.)

But surely the days are fast approaching, when the *French* themselves, once a gallant and generous nation, will melt in sympathy over the fortunes of their murdered monarch—a monarch equally dignified by his susceptibility of domestic tenderness, and his indifference to personal danger ; who amidst a ferocious rabble of fanatics and assassins, whilst he was declaring to the emigrants of *Coblentz* (*malgré son vœu, malgré ses ordres réunis sur les bords du Rhin*) that he had lost every hope and every resource but that of death, could calmly address to his son's tutor a very sensible paper on education, breathing the most anxious solicitude as a father, and the purest benevolence as a prince : in which he particularly directs him to place before his pupil the examples of *LOUIS IX., prince religieux, avec des mœurs et de la vérité ; LOUIS XII., qui ne veut point punir les conjurés du Duc d'Orléans, et qui reçoit des Français le titre de PÈRE DU PEUPLE ; du grand HENRI, qui nourrit la ville de Paris, qui l'outrage et lui fait la guerre ; de LOUIS XIV., non lorsqu'il donne des loix à l'Europe, mais lorsqu'il pacifie l'univers, et qu'il est le protecteur des talens, des sciences, et des beaux arts.*

Souvenez-vous (he subjoins) de lui enseigner, que c'est lorsqu'on peut tout, qu'il faut être très sobre de son autorité. Les loix sont les colonnes du trône : si on les viole, les peuples se croient déliés de leurs engagements. Les guerres civiles nous ont appris, que c'est presque toujours ceux qui gouvernent, qui par leurs fautes ont fait répandre le sang humain : le roi juste est le bon roi.

emplary conduct, addressed her in a sonnet which he inscribed in a copy of his *Sicilian Captive* ⁸, and gave to her in the presence of his whole family. As soon as the
praise

And again : *Apprenez lui, avec FENELON, que les princes pacifiques sont les seuls, dont les peuples conservent un religieux souvenir. Le premier devoir d'un prince est de rendre son peuple heureux : s'il sait être roi, il saura toujours bien défendre ce peuple et sa couronne.* But there would be no end of extracts, proving his passionate affection for " his people !"

⁸ A drama which, in the better days of our national *MELPOMENE*, would not have been confined to the shelf of *English* classics ! but,

—————*Migravit ab aure voluptas*
Omnis ad incertos oculos—————

(HOR. Ep. II. i. 188.)

And the meteor-glare of a masque or a procession, a stuffed elephant or a *Newfoundland* dog, is preferred to " the music of the spheres." Our tragedies, estimated by their effects on the audience, are bad comedies ; which would have excited in *ARISTOTLE* *pity* only for the author, and *terrou*r for the manager : and our comedies are worse farces.

The sonnet was as follows :

Accept these scenes, my child ! Your partial eyes,
With the great power that dwells with love alone,
Will give my dross a lustre not it's own ;
And stamp it with a worth, which truth denies.

praise caught her eye, she closed the book ; and, with a countenance which “spoke unutterable things,” returned it to the giver to be withdrawn from the observation of her brothers, whose sensibilities she feared might be hurt by the preference thus obviously assigned to herself.

Not many months before her decease, a beggar-woman in the neighbourhood, who had long been the object of her secret beneficence, through her interest with some of the managers of the *Westminster*-Hospital, received for one of her children, which had suffered by an accident, support and medical assistance. In consequence of not seeing for some time her youthful benefactress, the poor creature was induced to inquire of the servants about her ; and, on being
made

O early crown'd with poësy's high prize !

Your lips a seraph from the empyreal throne

Hath “touch'd with fire,” and to your vision shown

The world of fancy, bright with countless dyes.

Nor only in your head, but in your breast

Dispensing gifts is seen the heavenly grace ;

In that by light, in this by warmth confest,

It sweetly quickens in your form and face.

There may it live, 'till the frail body rest ;

Then, with it's kindred soul, regain it's native skies.

March 25, 1801.

C. S.

made acquainted with her loss, burst into a violent fit of crying, and betrayed almost frantic grief. These bounties, it appeared, the little angel had furnished from a small fund of her own ; and, when her purse failed, had (frequently with her own hands) supplied the deficiency from her father's kitchen. But what distinguished her charity, and indeed her whole conduct, from that of most other children was—the principle, from which they proceeded, and from which they derived the steadiness and uniformity of system. This it is the parents' “delightful task”—in the present instance how admirably executed!—to infuse into their offspring : not cherishing in them the capricious self-indulgence of the sentimentalist, or the mechanical generosity of the spendthrift ; but from their earliest dawn of reason proposing to them, as the invariable object of all their alms and actions, the fulfilment of the will of God. With the “five talents” dispensed to CAROLINE SYMMONS it does not, probably, fall to the lot of one in an age or a country to be intrusted ; but all may be rendered capable of enjoying, and of diffusing, their *maximum* of happiness by the sedulous improvement of whatever smaller number they have received. It should also be recollected, as the compensation of their

inferiority, that with great abilities are inseparably connected great duties and great dangers : that the functions of genius are arduous, and its responsibilities alarming : and, not to mention with MARTIAL the *Immodicis brevis ætas*, or what WALLER represents as

The common fate of all things rare,
How small a part of time they share,
Who are so wondrous sweet and fair !

that the *largus et exundans ingenii fons* ⁹, even without this perhaps-superstitious notion of a premature exhaustion, is still not one of the boons (if we may trust the records of history) which a father should importune heaven to bestow upon his child.

To return. Not less remarkable than the beauties of her person, the elegance of her taste, the strength of her understanding, and the goodness of her heart, was her steadfast and humble piety. Through the whole of her

⁹ Juv. Sat. X. (119.) a poem once recommended by a bishop to his clergy, in a pastoral letter ; and for it's vivid imagery and it's awful sublimity perhaps unparalleled. What could be done however, in the way of imitation, has been done by our own JOHNSON in his "Vanity of Human Wishes;" in which the whole passage upon the perils of literary eminence in particular,

"When first the college-rolls," &c.

is exquisitely beautiful.

illness, she was constant in her devotions ; and, when the extreme weakness and emaciation occasioned by her malady made the posture of kneeling (long painful) at length impracticable, she deeply regretted the circumstance, as disqualifying her for offering her adorations in a suitable manner. With such a disposition, it will not be matter of surprise that her behaviour, at all times exemplary, in the hours immediately preceding her dissolution should have been admirable. Not a single complaint fell from her lips. Even on the last morning of her earthly existence, when she had expressed to her maid a wish to die, she instantly corrected herself, and said “ No, it is sinful to wish for death ; I will not wish for it.”

She was, in short, as pure a character, as perhaps has ever appeared ; and discovered, in the short space of fourteen years, a very singular combination of intellectual and moral excellence. But she is gone from this valley of grief to that better world, where there shall be “ no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain : for to her the former things are passed away.” Rescued from the dangers and evils of this probationary state, and whispered by God’s “ still

small voice" to her crown of glory, she is surely in her fate, as she was in her faculties and accomplishments, most enviable.—Alas ! I speak, as a philosopher : but, when I turn my eyes to my own little prattling daughters, I shudder at the uncertainty of fate ; I mingle my tears with those of my friend ; I feel, that I am a man.

F. W.



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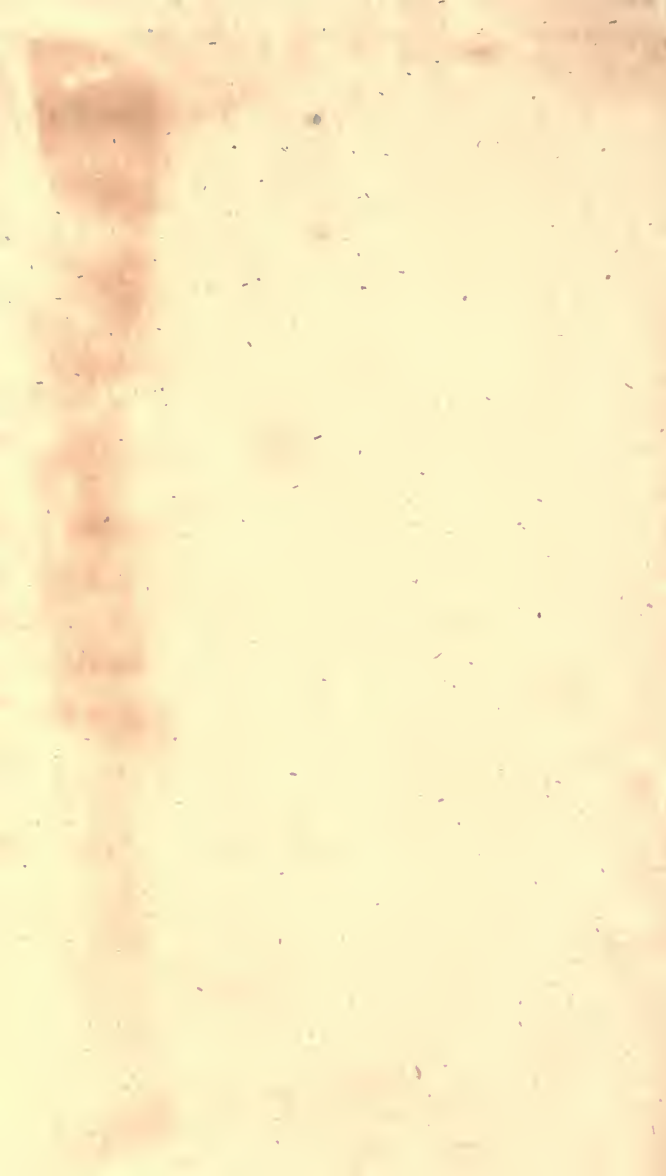
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